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PROBLEMS AND METHODS OF THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

EDITED BY

U. BIANCHI · C. J. BLEEKER · A. BAUSANI

PROBLEMS AND METHODS OF THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

STUDIES

IN THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

(SUPPLEMENTS TO *NUMEN*)

XIX

PROBLEMS AND METHODS OF THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

LEIDEN
E. J. BRILL
1972

PROBLEMS AND METHODS OF THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

Proceedings of the Study Conference
organized by the Italian Society for the History of Religions
on the occasion of the tenth anniversary
of the death of Raffaele Pettazzoni,
Rome, 6th to 8th December 1969

PAPERS AND DISCUSSIONS

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U. BIANCHI • C. J. BLEEKER • A. BAUSANI

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FOREWORD

It is commonly agreed that a science is not so much defined by its object but rather by its *method* (we do not say *methodology*, a term which applies only to the subsequent reflection on a *methodos*—i.e. on a 'progressing knowledge'—that is already in action). This volume, as well as the symposion that gave occasion to it, is dedicated to questions about method, raised by today's History of Religions.

The more a method is apprehended rigorously in its own implications, both positive and negative, the more it is made a suitable instrument for science and for mutual understanding among scholars in the field of their common research work. This is not in real contrast with a legitimate plurality of approaches to a common scientific concern, as long as the epistemological pertinence is safeguarded, with the exclusion of any heterogeneous presupposition, superficial deduction, gratuitous 'intuition', programmatic reduction, or bias. This, in fact, could impede a validity *erga omnes* which is the *specificum* of scientific argument and of a rigorous practice of inductive research.

We will be content if this book contributes to fostering interest in questions about the method of the History of Religions.

THE EDITORS

THE STUDY CONFERENCE

The Study Conference on "Problems and Methods of the History of Religions: 1959-1969", organized by the Società italiana di storia delle religioni on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the death of its founder Raffaele Pettazzoni, was held in Rome, in the Aula of the Museo Nazionale d'Arte Orientale, on the 6th to 8th December, 1969.

The central theme of the conference was in full harmony with the great interest of Pettazzoni in methodological questions and in particular in the elucidation of the historical comparative method and the evaluation of phenomenological research on religion. Not less in harmony with the scientific interest of the same scholar was the fact, that besides general approaches to the theme special papers would be devoted to special fields and religious cultures, in order to underline the historical character of our discipline.

A remarkable number of scholars, both Italian and from other countries, attended the Study Conference and took part in the discussions, the minutes of which were recorded in full and are given almost completely in this volume, in accordance with the dialogue character of the Conference and its subject.

Contrary to what usually happens, the reports of the discussions have not been abridged, but sometimes enlarged, by subsequent insertions by the authors themselves in the recorded text; this in order to render in full — beyond the limits that render a discussion less satisfying — the intention of the arguments, and — so to speak — in order to extend the dialogue beyond the days of the conference and, as far as possible, to go beyond extemporization in question and answer.

Guests of the Conference were the President and the Secretary General of the International Association for the History of Religions, Proff. G. Widengren and C. J. Bleeker, who read papers. Present were Mrs. Adele Pettazzoni and many of Pettazzoni's old friends and colleagues. Former pupils of his, among whom dr. Dino Satolli, recalled warmly personal memories of Pettazzoni and of the ebullient ethnological milieu of the "Rome of the thirties". (In this connexion we recall that Pettazzoni, Professor of the History of Religions at Rome University since 1924, was also the founder of the Istituto per le Civiltà Primitive in the same University — now called Istituto di

Etnologia). Further, Prof. Widengren recalled Pettazzoni's lectures at the University of Uppsala, which — as he said — inspired his phenomenological work on the idea of a High-God.

A number of scholars from foreign countries sent their greetings to the Conference, among whom Mircea Eliade, who was prevented from coming but declared his interest in renewing old Roman discussions in methodology.

Adhesion to the Conference was signified also by the authorities of S. Giovanni in Persiceto, Pettazzoni's birth-place.

Particular thanks are due to Dr. Domenico Faccenna, Director of the Museo Nazionale d'Arte Orientale, where the Conference was held.

The opening address and the papers are given in order they were read. Prof. Bianchi's paper has undergone some adaptation by selection of the subjects touched upon. Prof. Michelini Tocci chose to put off the publication of his paper "Currents of Judaic Religiousness" to another occasion.

LUIGI SALVATORELLI
Rome

LA PERSONALITÀ MORALE DI RAFFAELE PETTAZZONI

Il mio primo incontro con Raffaele Pettazzoni — punto di partenza di una amicizia non soltanto scientifica durata tutta la vita — fu, se la memoria non mi tradisce, al Congresso della Società delle scienze tenuto a Siena nell'autunno 1913, in cui per la prima volta vi fu una sezione dedicata alla storia delle religioni. In quel tempo io coltivavo di proposito gli studi di storia delle religioni; e frutto di quegli studi fu un libro: *Introduzione biobibliografica alla Scienza delle religioni*, che porta la data editoriale 1914, e oggi non credo possa conservare qualche interesse salvo tutt'al più per la storia di quella disciplina. Io, però, già precedentemente avevo rivolto una attenzione più intensa agli studi di storia del cristianesimo, e già allora ne vedevo e studiavo le connessioni con la storia civile: e dopo quel libro mi trasportai interamente in quello studio. Il Pettazzoni invece già nella sua tesi di laurea di alcuni anni avanti *Le origini dei Kabiri nelle isole del Mar Tracio*, partendo dai suoi studi universitari di archeologia, aveva dimostrato il suo interesse per gli studi storico-religiosi, interesse divenuto primario, e tanto fruttuoso da fare di lui un maestro in qualche anno, come si vede in quella monografia del 1912 su *La religione primitiva in Sardegna*, che lo mostra in pieno possesso del metodo e dello spirito di quella disciplina.

Ho detto tutto questo per spiegare che dopo quella mia *Introduzione* io abbandonai lo studio sistematico della storia e scienza delle religioni, pur conservando con essa un contatto, per dir così, marginale — contatto dovuto per la più gran parte proprio alla conoscenza delle numerosissime e fondamentali pubblicazioni del Pettazzoni. Questo spostamento dell'asse dei miei studi ha avuto per effetto che oggi non mi sentirei capace di una esposizione tecnica dell'insieme dell'opera pettazzoniana che fosse non troppo al disotto del soggetto; e ancor meno avrei potuto preparare, come gli studiosi specifici qui presenti, una trattazione nel quadro della materia, in omaggio al ricordo del Maestro. Ma poichè d'altra parte sentivo il dovere — grato dovere, ma anche serio compito — di partecipare attivamente alla celebrazione odierna, ho preferito di rievocare taluni tratti fondamentali, morali prima ancora che scientifici, della sua personalità.

La dedizione del Pettazzoni, per tutta la sua opera scientifica, alla storia delle religioni non fu una di quelle scelte ordinarie che ogni giovane laureato, dedito agli studi, compie fra diverse possibilità più o meno affini, ma talora anche assai diverse. La scelta del Pettazzoni ebbe il carattere di una vera e propria vocazione. S'intende che la prima origine, lo spunto iniziale di orientamento, non possiamo pretendere di cercarlo e trovarlo: forse neppure il protagonista avrebbe potuto. C'è però un punto su cui siamo perfettamente in chiaro. Dedicandosi così attivamente e pienamente alla sua disciplina, il Pettazzoni fu accompagnato sin dall'inizio dalla constatazione che nella scienza e nella coltura italiana c'era una grande lacuna: che quella disciplina, sviluppata pienamente da tempo all'estero, era rimasta completamente trascurata, e quasi potrebbe dirsi ignota in Italia. I due fattori — interesse personale dominante per la materia, e constatazione di questa lacuna nella coltura nazionale — si fusero insieme, mirabilmente: la capacità di lavoro posseduta dal Pettazzoni ne fu incitata e sviluppata. Questa non è una congettura plausibile, ma semplicemente la presa d'atto di dichiarazioni personali sue, di cui si potrebbe stendere una lunga lista, dal primo all'ultimo dei suoi libri, specialmente ricavandole dalle succose e luminose prefazioni e introduzioni da lui premesse alle sue opere.

Rimediare a codesta trascuranza, riempire codesta lacuna fu dunque proposito ben cosciente, ben fermo del Pettazzoni. Diciamo subito che il suo impegno, nazionale e scientifico al tempo stesso, ebbe ottima attuazione. Anche senza la riunione d'oggi, possiamo constatare che le discipline storico-religiose, Storia e Scienza delle religioni, sono largamente, definitivamente acclimatate in Italia; e hanno preso un posto onorevole nella scienza e nella coltura contemporanea europea ed estraeuropea. Certamente, questo non è stato dovuto unicamente all'insegnamento e alla produzione di Pettazzoni; ma che egli vi abbia avuto una funzione iniziale e una parte preponderante, è fuori di ogni dubbio; e la presidenza da lui tenuta per anni dell'Associazione internazionale di storia delle religioni, se è stata l'espressione più significativa del successo mondiale dell'opera sua, non è rimasta un fatto personale isolato; molti riconoscimenti esteri dei contributi italiani in quel campo possiamo annoverare, e questa stessa riunione ne è testimonianza.

Se Pettazzoni deplorò così vivamente e sistematicamente la trascuranza passata; se, per suo conto, agli studi storico-religiosi dedicò tutta la sua vita, ciò fu dovuto non soltanto a un interesse scientifico,

o sia pure nazionale: ci fu, in fondo a tutto ciò, un fattore morale primario. Ci fu la valutazione da lui affermata e applicata — fin dall' inizio risaliente a tempi di laicismo a oltranza — del fatto religioso. Non semplice indagine erudita di miti e di riti; non semplice contributo alla conoscenza di istituti e di svolgimenti lontani nel tempo e nello spazio; ma una convinzione ferma, profonda, diciamo pure appassionata, della religione come fattore primario, costante e generale, nella vita dei popoli, fu il substrato morale della attività pettazzoniana. S'intende che in ciò non ebbe parte alcuna confessionalismo, clericalismo, anticlericalismo. Pettazzoni, con avidità di studioso e scrupolo di scienziato, indagò per il soggetto dei suoi libri e per sostegno delle sue tesi, le credenze, i riti, i costumi di tutti — possiamo dire senza esagerazione — i popoli della terra. Basterebbe ricordare i quattro poderosi volumi di *Miti e leggende*; ma vogliamo aggiungere per lo meno le due vastissime raccolte critiche che sono alla base de *L'essere celeste nelle credenze dei popoli primitivi* e de *L'onniscienza di Dio*.

Pettazzoni non pretese mai, e anzi escluse recisamente, ogni tentativo di ricerca o ricostruzione di una religione tipica, fondamentale, sia come rappresentata concretamente da qualche parte e in qualche tempo, sia soggiacente nel fondo delle singole religioni, o di alcune maggiori fra esse. Tanto meno ritenne, e anche qui escluse più recisamente che mai, la costruzione di una storia unica delle religioni, compiuta infilando, per dir così, una dopo l'altra, le storie delle singole religioni. Nella distinzione classica tra "storia delle religioni" e "scienza delle religioni", o più precisamente fenomenologia religiosa, — distinzione che egli riconosceva e all'occorrenza praticava da maestro — egli intese l'indagine e la costruzione fenomenologica sia come propedeutica alla storia delle religioni singole sia come risultato dell'una o altra di esse, da utilizzare ulteriormente per altre indagini storico-religiose. Egli, cioè, risolveva (se non mi inganno) la fenomenologia nella storia, che conserva così tutta la sua concretezza e fondamentalità.

C'era, e c'è, una questione fondamentale, per lo storico religioso e altresì per quello civile: quella del rapporto tra le due diverse vite dei popoli e degli individui, religiosa e civile. Una tale questione, oggi più viva che mai, e in cui all'aspetto scientifico o storico si associa e forse prevale quello morale, era ben presente al Pettazzoni; ma non ne conosco una sua trattazione sistematica. Soccorre qui — ed è soccorso prezioso — l'opuscolo di Angelo Brelich, suo successore sulla cattedra romana: *Gli ultimi appunti di Raffaele Pettazzoni*. In quegli appunti,

riportati testualmente e sagacemente commentati, il Brelich ha trovato materia per congetturare la preparazione del Pettazzoni per uno scontro a fondo con uno studioso, come si dice, di cartello, in fatto di scienza delle religioni, Mircea Eliade, che fa delle credenze fondamentali religiose qualcosa di appartenente al passato, e oggi purtroppo superata da una concezione e pratica della vita umana eminentemente pessimistica. Sia, o no, valida la congettura, gli appunti, anche così come sono, testimoniano una fede tenace nella storia e nella vita, anche in quella presente, e in una concordia — anziché in un contrasto fondamentale — tra vita civile e credenza religiosa. Scriveva dunque Pettazzoni quasi testamentariamente: "La storia non è tutta orrore, catastrofe, male, peccato. La storia, cioè la vita, è anche lavoro, gioia, speranza... La filosofia di Eliade risente del triste tempo in cui egli è vissuto, come noi tutti... Ne viene fuori una filosofia della religione per la quale la religione è tutta rivolta al passato, come stato paradisiaco, da cui procede una decadenza, e quindi una disperazione umana, una viltà, una sfiducia nel corso attuale della vita — e anche un atteggiamento anticristiano".

Pettazzoni, dunque, giunto alla fine, conservava insieme la fede nella vita, e il concorso positivo per questa vita della religione. Ci sta bene, qui, una seconda, ultima citazione: "Forse il terreno storico è il solo sul quale possano risolversi quegli elementi passionali e sentimentali che si oppongono allo studio obbiettivo, come del problema religioso in genere, così in specie del problema di Dio".

Come non ripensare, leggendo queste parole — ripeto: testamentarie — all'appello appassionato con cui egli concluse le sue parole di ringraziamento alle onoranze fattegli per il suo 75° anno, perchè gli studi storico-religiosi non fossero abbandonati? Quell'appello aveva un fine e un valore non soltanto scientifico, ma anche, e anzi prevalentemente, un valore morale. Pettazzoni compiva quella invocazione — e, se mal non ricordo, lo disse espressamente — perché riteneva e aveva sempre ritenuto che gli studi storico-religiosi potessero essere di stimolo e di incremento al pacifico affratellamento dei popoli. Raccogliamo tutti questo messaggio umano, e cerchiamo tutti — ognuno per la sua via — che esso non risulti vano.

GEO WIDENGREN

Uppsala

LA MÉTHODE COMPARATIVE: ENTRE PHILOLOGIE ET PHÉNOMÉNOLOGIE

1. Nous savons tous que notre temps, présentant une réaction contre la période d'un historicisme prononcé, s'est montré non seulement anhistorique, mais même anti-historique. Pour notre discipline qui s'appelle — quand même — l'histoire des religions, cette tendance a abouti à une prédilection pour une sous-discipline systématique, non-historique, c.-à-d. la phénoménologie religieuse.

On comprend assez bien que des esprits, possédant une sympathie marquée pour des recherches historiques sur la religion, ont suivi ce développement avec beaucoup d'inquiétude. Mais aussi des phénoménologues qui ont commencé leur carrière comme historiens et qui sont restés fermement et solidement enracinés dans l'histoire des religions, dans la signification propre, ont éprouvé un besoin spécial de garder la connection entre histoire et phénoménologie.

Cela a été le cas manifestement aussi de Raffaele Pettazzoni, dont nous célébrons ces jours le dixième de la mort, en rappelant ses grands mérites à l'intérieur de la phénoménologie religieuse.

2. Dans son article si bien connu sur la méthode comparative Pettazzoni énonce comme son opinion tout bien considérée que les monographies et les manuels phénoménologiques ont négligé l'idée d'un développement. C. J. Bleeker en discutant à son tour l'article de Pettazzoni a admis sans réserve que celui-ci, par cette critique, a touché la phénoménologie à son endroit sensible. Bleeker dit que les phénomènes religieux, en grande partie, peuvent être examinés en tant qu'ils sont „des photographies arrêtées". Mais on ne saurait oublier que les phénomènes sont aussi comme un film roulant, c.-à-d. qu'ils ne sont pas exclusivement statiques, mais dans bien des cas aussi dynamiques. Le problème est donc: comment présenter un phénomène religieux à l'intérieur de son développement? Ce problème va de pair avec un autre problème: comment présenter le dossier complet d'un phénomène?

La réponse à ces deux questions rend nécessaire un aperçu rapide de l'histoire de la phénoménologie comme sous-discipline de l'histoire des religions. Or, la phénoménologie s'est développée en sortant de

la discipline appelée „religion comparée" ou „méthode comparative". Il est en effet significatif que Pettazzoni en discutant les questions méthodologiques associées à la phénoménologie religieuse intitule son article „La méthode comparative". Ici il se révèle comme un disciple d'une époque antérieure à la nôtre.

En principe on pourrait dire que la méthode idéale en présentant et en analysant un phénomène serait une comparaison de toutes les variantes de ce phénomène, comme elles se trouvent dans les religions individuelles, et cela pour ne pas en simplifier la présentation, de telle façon que le résultat ultime en serait une falsification. Cependant, cette méthode qui en soi rappelle parfaitement la méthode comparative, pratiquée non seulement autrefois mais aussi de nos jours, pour des raisons évidentes se montre impraticable quand il s'agit d'un manuel phénoménologique ou d'un traité qui se propose de discuter un phénomène assez compréhensif.

Prenons p.ex. la monographie de Pettazzoni que traite la confession des péchés. En trois volumes il a présenté et analysé en ordre successif presque toutes les religions du monde, en consacrant un espace spécial à chaque religion ou groupe de religions. Pourtant, la grande synthèse phénoménologique manque et a été substituée par quelques articles, évidemment conçus par leur auteur comme ayant un caractère provisoire. En principe c'est là la vieille méthode comparative.

Un peu différente est manifestement la méthode pratiquée par Pettazzoni en traitant le thème de l'omniscience de Dieu dans son ouvrage fondamental „The All-knowing God", dont il existe aussi des résumés en italien et en allemand. Ici il passe sans aucune hésitation de la religion classique aux religions des peuples non-littéraires, qu'il appelle d'ailleurs „des religions primitives", appellation qui nécessite des réserves assez fortes.

L'ordre de la présentation des matériaux est intéressant du point de vue historique. L'auteur commence avec l'Ancien Testament, ensuite il prête son attention à la religion égyptienne, avance à la Mésopotamie et la Phénicie, passe à la religion indo-iranienne et aux autres religions indo-européennes, après quoi il examine les peuples eurasiens, parmi eux aussi la religion chinoise pour passer ensuite en revue les peuples non-littéraires.

Or, d'un point de vue strictement historique cet ordre incite aux réserves. Un savant qui reste soucieux de garder la perspective historique doit commencer par les plus anciennes civilisations du monde, c.-à-d. Égypte et Mésopotamie, et les cultures qui en sont tributaires,

c.-à-d. les religions des Sémites de l'Ouest, les Phéniciens, Hébreux et Arabes. Surtout, on bouleverse complètement le developpement historique en traitant p.ex. la religion des Hébreux avant celles de l'Égypte, de la Mésopotamie et de la Phénicie. La dernière, par accord universel, a exercé une influence profonde et manifeste sur la religion israélite. Après avoir examiné les religions de l'Ancien Orient il faut traiter la religion de l'ancienne culture chinoise, troisième culture en âge de produire une soi-disant „Hochkultur" (culture élevée). Il faut souligner aussi le fait qu'on a absolument à examiner la religion chinoise avant de s'occuper des autres religions en Asie, et pas du tout pratiquer l'ordre inverse — comme l'a fait l'auteur — si l'on veut préserver le caractère historique aussi dans un travail phénoménologique.

Après avoir traité les religions asiatiques on pourrait procéder à une analyse des religions indo-européennes et ensuite des anciennes cultures américaines avec leurs prolongements dans les religions des peuples américains non-littéraires. A ce propos on observe le fait assez étonnant que l'omniscience du dieu Tezcatlipoca, appartenant au pantheon aztèque, est traîtée après que l'auteur a examiné les idées des Pueblos, peuple chez lequel on trouve incontestablement des traces d'une influence aztèque, bien explicable à cause des affinités ethniques et linguistiques.

Ainsi il est évident que l'auteur n'a pas été complètement fidèle aux principes, qu'il déclare lui-même vouloir suivre. Dans son article déjà cité Pettazzoni, avec une certaine force, souligne l'importance de l'idée d'un développement historique. Il faut que le phénoménologue tienne compte de l'âge respectif des cultures qu'il analyse. Surtout il faut prêter attention aux problèmes génétiques. On ne peut pas négliger l'enchaînement historique entre certaines cultures ou certains peuples, d'ailleurs assez facile à montrer grâce à la méthode historique.

Les mêmes réflexions méthodologiques s'offrent immédiatement à la critique quand on observe l'arrangement des matériaux dans la vaste enquête qu'a entreprise Pettazzoni dans son livre sur la Confession des péchés. Cependant il est superflu de montrer comment une telle enquête serait organisée pour satisfaire aux demandes historiques.

3. Dans l'ouvrage sur l'omniscience de Dieu il y a cependant des cas où l'auteur compare sans aucune hésitation des phénomènes appartenant à des religions tout à fait différentes et, ainsi, ne possédant pas de connections historiques entre eux. Ces cas touchent une question spéciale, p.ex. le cas où l'impie, qui est en même temps un fou, ne

croit pas en l'omniscence de Dieu. Ici l'auteur en traitant la religion iranienne fait une comparaison entre Mithra et Jahvé, comparaison purement phénoménologique. Ou bien, en faisant quelques remarques, fort intéressantes d'ailleurs, sur la structure idéologique de la conception d'une omniscience divine l'auteur n'hésite pas à comparer le Tore des Pygmées avec le Jahvé des Hébreux pour en démontrer la convergence phénoménologique. Dans ces cas-ci il s'agit cependant de conclusions exclusivement phénoménologiques. Pour cette raison on ne peut pas dire que l'auteur, dans un tel cas, entre en conflit avec ses propres principes.

Ainsi Pettazzoni dans son volume sur l'omniscience de Dieu, sans aucune déviation de la méthode traditionnelle, applique l'analyse phénoménologique. Je ne trouve aucune différence entre sa méthode et la mienne, telle que je l'ai pratiquée dans mon manuel phénoménologique, maintenant accessible en allemand sous le titre de „Religionsphänomenologie", c.-à.-d. quand il s'agit de présenter des matériaux concernant le Grand Dieu.

Mais Pettazzoni n'a pas voulu se concentrer seulement sur la phénomenologie. Il a voulu aussi présenter une explication historique d'un certain phénomène, c.-à-d. l'attribut divin de l'omniscience. Cette entreprise reste dépendante de la condition que l'enquête phénoménologique ait été exécutée avec un examen des faits scrupuleuse. Or, la base n'est pas toujours parfaitement solide. P.ex. l'auteur dit que le Grand Dieu souvent n'est pas un créateur, en soutenant qu'il existe un dualisme typologique entre l'idée d'une activité et l'idée d'une omniscience divine. C'est en soi bien possible, mais pas du tout un phénomène universel. L'auteur dit expressément que les Grands Dieux des peuples indo-européens ne sont pas des créateurs, mais bien des dieux omniscients et qui voient tout. Or, il n'en est pas toujours ainsi. Ahura Mazda p.ex. est le créateur, comme le dit l'inscription de Naqsh i Rustam. Quant aux religions sémitiques, et Jahve et Marduk sont des dieux omniscients et en même temps des créateurs. Le dualisme prétendu n'est pas aussi strict que le pense l'auteur.

Le point de départ est donc déjà un peu suspect. Suivons cependant l'auteur dans ses recherches historiques. Des „formes" il veut maintenant proceder au niveau des „formations". Il part ici de l'hypothèse que le stade de culture le plus ancien chez les tribus des Hébreux a été le nomadisme. En général on admet que ces tribus, avant leur immigration en Palestine, n'ont pas été du tout des nomades, mais bien des semi-nomades. Mais j'ai argumenté ailleurs qu'une analyse des

plus anciennes couches des langues sémitiques rend assez douteue cette hypothèse et aujourd'hui je ne suis pas le seul savant à défendre cette opinion. Mais acceptons provisoirement l'hypothèse que les anciens Hébreux ont été *exclusivement* des semi-nomades.

L'auteur fait ensuite une comparaison entre Jahvé et le dieu mexicain Tezcatlipoca, qui à son avis sont susceptibles d'une comparaison, parce qu'ils appartiennent tous les deux à des traditions culturelles comparables: d'un coté la culture des nomades (sic) ou pasteurs sémitiques et de l'autre la culture des peuples barbares, venus du Nord (Nahua).

A l'image d'une culture de nomades ou de pasteurs s'adapte facilement la notion d'un père céleste qui sait tout. Dans la vie des pasteurs-nomades se trouvent les présuppositions d'une foi en un dieu céleste, un Être Suprème. L'uniformité phénoménologique entre Jahvé et Tezcatlipoca, d'après l'auteur, s'expliquerait par les mêmes conditions culturelles.

Je n'ai rien à objecter à une comparaison entre la foi d'un peuple de pasteurs-nomades en un Grand Dieu et le meme type de religion chez un autre peuple de pasteurs-nomades. Il y a plus de trente ans que j'ai fait justement cette comparaison entre la religion des tribus de l'Iran ancien et les tribus africains modernes qui se trouvent à un stade de pasteurs-nomades. Mais il faut observer deux conditions: premièrement, la comparaison que j'ai faite a été exclusivement d'ordre phénoménologique. Je n'ai voulu tirer aucune conclusion historique de cette comparaison. Deuxièmement, il faut que cette comparaison se rapporte à deux peuples qui sont incontestablement des pasteurs-nomades, c.-à-d. qui se trouvent au même stade de développement culturel. Or dans le cas actuel il n'en est rien. Le dieu Tezcatlipoca n'appartient pas du tout à un peuple de pasteurs-nomades, parce que le nomadisme n'a pas existé avant l'arrivée des Européens. Et en effet, l'auteur s'exprime d'une façon assez flottante en parlant non pas d'un peuple nomade, mais d'un peuple „barbare" (que signifie d'ailleurs cette expression très curieuse de point de vue de l'ethnologie?) venu du Nord — ce qui est tout autre chose et n'indique pas un stade de nomadisme.

Pour conclure: rien indique que Jahvé et Tezcatlipoca aient été adorés par deux peuples appartenant au même type de culture. Au contraire, on voudrait bien supposer qu'ils etaient adorés parmi des peuples appartenant à des civilisations très différentes.

4. Pettazzoni a voulu étendre son enquête jusqu'à englober la terre entière en essayant de trouver dans les cultures des pasteurs-nomades

l'origine de *l'histoire* de la conception d'un Grand Dieu. Mais c'est franchir là les limites d'une enquête *phénoménologique*. Dans son article sur la méthode comparative il a correctement observé que la phénoménologie présente seulement une image fixe d'un phénomène. La méthode est statique d'après lui — ce qui est parfaitement exact. Mais si l'on passe d'une enquête phénoménologique à une hypothèse historique — sans faire d'ailleurs une analyse historique satisfaisante — on n'apporte pas une contribution à la méthodologie phénoménologique. Il s'agit ici en effet d'une *metábasis eis to állo génos*. Pour cette raison on aimerait mieux voir l'aspect dynamique d'un certain phénomène être pris en compte par une présentation des stades différents du développement de ce phénomène — sans en vouloir donner une explication historique.

Je m'empresse de dire que je suis tombé moi-même dans la même erreur dans mon ouvrage phénoménologique. Je n'ai pas suffisamment tracé les lignes de démarcation entre la méthode historique et la méthode comparative, p.ex. en traitant les sociétés et organisations religieuses, le prophétisme etc., mais aussi quand il s'agit de présenter une idée religieuse, p.ex. justement le développement de la notion d'un Grand Dieu. C'est le même motif que chez Pettazzoni qui m'a poussé dans cette direction, mais je trouve aujourd'hui que ce mélange des méthodes historique et phénoménologique constitue une erreur méthodique regrettable. Aujourd'hui je voudrais recommander de présenter seulement les stades successifs d'un phénomène, comme des images roulantes, sans en tirer des conclusions historiques. En faisant cela on pourrait à la fois satisfaire aux exigences de Pettazzoni et Bleeker et éviter la confusion méthodologique dont nous avons parlé ici.

De toute évidence, c'est l'intérêt historique qui a causé cette erreur méthodique dont nous avons été coupables. Dans ses notes sur les ouvrages de Mircea Eliade qui traitent de divers aspects phénoménologiques Pettazzoni a réagi vigoureusement contre l'attitude de Eliade qu'il caractérise comme anti-historique. Partout Pettazzoni s'oppose à l'hypothèse qu'il a existé une humanité archétypale, antérieure à un homme-historique. Il va de soi que Pettazzoni a raison. On ne peut pas construire une différence entre un homme soi-disant „archaïque" et un homme „historique". Tout homme à toute époque a été „historique", seulement la plupart des hommes ne sont pas du tout conscients d'être intégrés dans l'histoire. C'est un fait incontestable que la majorité préfère la légende ou le mythe à l'histoire. Eliade a montré comment le mythe triomphe de l'histoire, un fait auquel je me suis

intéressé moi aussi. Mais ce phénomène est universel, il paraît partout aussi de nos jours.

Pettazzoni en historien convaincu a réagi contre la tendance de voir les phénomènes religieux dans un milieu „archaïque", „archétypal", complètement isolé de toute histoire.

En effet, il est bien douteux que l'usage de termes comme „archétype" et „archétypal" serve un but utile parce qu'ils sont difficilement définissables et en conséquence obscurs et douteux. Les archétypes — même si l'on voudrait en admettre l'existence — n'existent pas indépendamment de l'homme, ils ne sont pas des entités possédant une réalité ontologique, comme l'a observé très correctement Pettazzoni. Les introduire dans la discussion phénoménologique ne sert qu'à créer une confusion regrettable dans notre analyse des phénomènes. L'excellent travail scientifique de Eliade reste indépendant de cette terminologie pour ainsi dire „secteriste".

Inversement dans la terminologie phénoménologique le terme „archaïque" est de beaucoup préférable au terme „primitif", terme dont la méthode comparative a tellement abusé qu'il a perdu presque toute signification. On comprend difficilement pourquoi des historiens de la religion se servent encore de nos jours d'un terme qu'ont abandonné les ethnologues. Eliade en effet ne parle *jamais* d'une „pensée primitive", ce que fait constamment Pettazzoni. On s'imagine mal ce qui se cache derrière ce terme, tandis que „la pensée archaïque" est de moins, en principe, chronologiquement assez bien définie. C'est l'homme préhistorique ou l'homme historique appartenant aux anciennes périodes de l'histoire humaine. Cependant, chose remarquable, Eliade semble vouloir reconstruire, pour ainsi dire, cet homme „archaïque" en ayant recours aux peuples non-littéraires modernes, méthode que je trouve inadmissible.

5. Si l'on prend son point de départ seulement dans un passé lointain, „reconstruit" surtout d'après les religions des peuples soi-disant non-civilisés (il va de soi d'ailleurs que chaque peuple possède une civilisation) ou des peuples appartenant aux anciennes civilisations d'Egypte, de Mésopotamie et des Indes etc., on presentera une image d'un phénomène, se trouvant en dedans de ces religions, qui est probablement correcte pour ces anciennes périodes de l'histoire, autant qu'on peut la reconstruire, mais qui ne l'est nullement pour les stades ultérieurs des manifestations du phénomène en question. On peut p.ex. contraster la description de l'espace sacré telle que nous la lisons dans le „Traité d'histoire des religions" de Mircea Eliade et la description

— pourtant très incomplète — qui se trouve dans notre „Religionsphänomenologie". Dans le cas en question on ne peut pas négliger les grandes religions de l'humanité. Nous rencontrons ici un héritage néfaste de la méthode comparative, qui trop souvent s'est concentrée sur les religions des peuples soi-disant „non-civilisés", en ajoutant ici et là quelques illustrations tirées des civilisations anciennes, classiques et orientales.

Encore une observation qui concerne les matériaux analysés. Trop souvent on a consacré son attention aux phénomènes pour ainsi dire „extérieurs", en oubliant que la manière d'agir constitue le symbole d'une manière de penser. Il ne faut pas oublier l'attitude spirituelle qui se cache derrière l'action rituelle.

La même action pour cette raison exprime souvent une attitude divergente. Prenons p.ex. dans les différentes confessions chrétiennes la communion comme action rituelle. L'interprétation donnée à la communion est en fait assez variable et par là l'attitude et l'atmosphère parmi les croyants sont aussi variables. Il faut à tout prix éviter une interprétation phénoménologique qui se concentre *exclusivement* sur l'action extérieure, en oubliant les sentiments qui dominent les fidèles. La méthode comparative a abouti ainsi à des interprétations magiques de la communion qui sont en général complètement inadmissibles.

Un autre exemple se présente dans le développement qui va du temple à la basilique. Les facteurs qui ont conditionné le changement du temple à la synagogue ou à la mosquée, quels sont-ils? On a trop peu prêté attention à de tels phénoménes, parce que la phénoménologie a hérité des traditions de la méthode comparative qui ne s'est pas intéressée à de tels problèmes.

6. L'analyse de l'idée d'un Grand Dieu pourra être sans tenir compte d'un développement historique, à condition que les faits soient présentés d'une façon qui se montre correcte du point de vue historique. Je voudrais bien illustrer cette condition par un renvoi à mon ouvrage phénoménologique „Hochgottglaube im alten Iran". J'avais essayé là de présenter une typologie de Grand Dieu d'après laquelle le Grand Dieu est élevé au-dessus du bien et du mal et est en même temps bi-sexuel, c.-à.-d. élevé au dessus des tendances opposées. Le bien et le mal sont souvent conçus en fait comme ses deux fils. J'avais retrouvé ce type phénoménologique dans l'Iran antique tout comme en Afrique noire. Or, après la publication de mon livre en 1938 on a découvert la même typologie dans l'ancienne civilisation des Aztèques au Mexique, où le Grand Dieu était un Dieu bi-sexuel, en même temps qu'il

se trouvait au-dessus du bien et du mal, les tendances opposées étant représentées par les dieux Quetzalcoatl et Tezcatlipoca. De ces deux dieux on se forme l'idée qu'il sont les envoyés du Grand Dieu ou même ses deux fils.

Ainsi le type est là, voilà le fait important d'un point de vue phénoménologique, tandis que peu importe le développement historique qu'on pourrait éventuellement découvrir en dedans de ce type, car Tezcatlipoca selon toute probabilité est un dieu immigré du Nord, comme nous l'avons déjà fait observer. Pour la phénoménologie, le fait que le même phénomène se montre p.ex. dans l'Iran ancien, dans l'Afrique noire et dans le Mexique médiéval, reste essentiel. Cette coïncidence évidemment montre une certaine universalité de cette conception de Dieu, et c'est là que nous en voyons l'importance phénoménologique.

7. Quelques réflexions d'ordre général, qui concernent la nature de la méthode phénoménologique, suivront ici. Si banales qu'elles soient en partie, elles peuvent au moins provoquer des réflexions un peu différentes chez mes auditeurs.

M. Bleeker a formulé un principe, auquel je donne ma pleine adhésion. Il a dit que la phénoménologie prend à tâche d'arranger les faits dans un ordre systématique et après d'essayer d'en saisir la portée et la signification, somme toute de les comprendre d'un point de vue religieux, sans violer en aucune manière les faits historiques eux-mêmes. Je trouve cette formule excellente.

D'un autre côté j'hésite un peu à accepter la déclaration de Husserl citée par M. Bleeker, à savoir que la phénoménologie ne considère pas le bien individuel, mais la nature du bien. Certes, c'est la structure, le mécanisme, que le phénoménologue aura à analyser et à présenter. Mais souvent il faut prendre un fait individuel comme représentant individuel d'un type général, d'une structure, d'un mécanisme. En effet pour des raisons pratiques il est simplement impossible qu'on analyse *tous* les faits individuels pour en déduire la structure générale. C'est la raison pratique, qui a conduit le phénoménologue à ce que le professeur Goldammer appelle „des images impressionnistes" où un phénomène individuel représente la structure générale. Mais il y a une autre raison, la raison méthodologique. N'oublions pas que le phénomène est la chose qui se montre, *to phainómenon*. La structure se révèle donc seulement dans le phénomène tel quel. Mieux vaut illustrer un mécanisme, une structure par un phénomène individuel que de présenter des formules générales sans aucune illustration individuelle.

Et ici la philologie a un rôle à jouer. La philologie découvre souvent les facteurs conservateurs dans la langue religieuse et de cette manière inculque chez nous la tendance de continuité dans le monde des religions. Le même phénomène se présente à nos yeux dans des religions distinctes. La continuité est évidente p.ex. entre la religion mésopotamienne et la chrétienté syrienne, entre la religion juive et le christianisme, entre l'islam et les deux religions bibliques, entre l'hindouisme et le bouddhisme etc. Ici la philologie rend à la phénoménologie de grands services en rendant plus pénétrante notre vue.

La méthode phénoménologique, en se basant sur la philologie et la méthode comparative, comprend donc les stades suivants: 1. Description de faits. 2. Arrangement des faits dans un ordre systématique. 3. Interprétation des faits pour en comprendre la signification. 4. Essai d'établir un type, une structure, un mécanisme, sans en aucune manière violer les faits historiques, mais aussi sans confondre phénoménologie et histoire.

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THE DEFINITION OF RELIGION (ON THE METHODOLOGY OF HISTORICAL-COMPARATIVE RESEARCH)

In the discussions on historical-religious studies, a major importance is given to the problem of the definition of religion and the problem of method: two matters that really identify with each other. As a matter of fact in these studies it is not a question of a theoretical and abstract definition of religion but of a definition that results from a method of positive survey and is able to cover a vast and quite different series of facts, that belong to different cultures; facts, whose partial "religious" homogeneity is empirically agreed with already from the start, without any previous and surely adequate definition of their object. Furthermore to obtain a concrete definition of religion, i.e. a definition resulting from a more complete analysis of the facts that seem adapted to substantiate it, two methods are at disposal. A first one is the phenomenological method that, though it admits the necessity of proceeding in a positive manner, presupposes a previous granting to religion of a general autonomy of an atemporal category, and thus of an univocal basic meaning. A second one is the historical method which, seeing religion and its elements as historically qualified, considers as essential the very problematic of genesis and development, and it is in the frame of this context that a general concept of religion is to be tested, as well as the concept of a categorial autonomy (or to say it with Pettazzoni [1]), of an "autonomus value") of same [2]).

What do "religion" and "religious" mean? And not only "religion" and "religious", but even all those concepts and terms that have been at turn exchanged with the former, or in some way used during analogous speculations? I refer here to such terms as "the sacred", or "ultimate concern", or "the sense of absolute", or "breaking of level", or similar, which all more or less express modalities of religion that take

1) "Il metodo comparativo", in *Numen* VI, 1 (1959), p. 14.

2) For a detailed treatment of these methodological problems, also in connexion with the history of these studies, cf., by this A., *The History of Religions*, in the series "Studies in the History of Religions", Supplements to *Numen*, in the press.

their effective result from a positive research, but are all conditioned in their value, whenever they aim at defining "religious", were it only for a description of it.

And this goes also for that concept of "sacred" which people intend as coextensive with the very concept of "religious" itself, wherefrom "sacred" would be the most true and intimate essence. Now, let us consider Otto's quoting certain religions or religious forms wherein the sense of sacred is more evident in comparison with other where it is felt less [3]), while other scholars have contested the general applicability of Otto's categories [4]). This leads us to accept that the 'sacred' itself, at least in the meaning that Otto gives to the word, must be studied, phenomenologically and historically, against a more general "religious" background (whatever the meaning of "religious" could be: see below).

Same remark goes for such concepts as "ultimate concern", which could be referred to other human experiences too, but on the other hand matches instead perfectly in certain definite religions, for which the expression has been formed, and also in certain well-defined religious tempers.

But especially those definitions that call themselves "functional", and are at the same time frequently "reductive", i.e. destined to "explain" and "solve" religion (its origin and its persisting) in motivations of a sociological and psychological order, reveal themselves to be absolutely inadequate for a useful definition of religion in our studies. And this we affirm without referring to any opposite philosophical presupposition, as could be of religion as an *a priori* form of the spirit, gifted *de iure* with a universality and an ever-lasting presence during history and through all the historical possibilities [5]). A "functional" definition of religious is for instance the one given in Italy by E. De Martino, with his theory of a "de-historifying" function of religion, as a technique for the resolution of frightening existential anxieties, of the "crisis of presence" [6]). But here Melford E. Spiro, a social anthropologist, observes (although not in relation with de Martino's theory): "Social solidarity, anxiety reduction, confidence in unpredict-

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[3]) Cf. R. Otto, *Das Heilige*, 29. 30. ed., München s.a., p. 116 (ch. 14).

[4]) K. Rudolph, *Die Religionsgeschichte an der Leipziger Universität und die Entwicklung der Religionswissenschaft*, Berlin 1962 (Sitz. Ber. Sächs. Akad., Philol.-histor. Klasse. Bd. 107, H. 1), p. 55 ff., 164 ff.

[5]) See below.

[6]) U. Bianchi, *Problemi di storia delle religioni*, Rome 1958, pp. 127-130 (= *Probleme der Religionsgeschichte*, Göttingen 1964, pp. 86-88). See also the book quoted on n. 2.

able situations, and the like, are functions which may be served by any or all cultural phenomena—Communism and Catholicism, monotheism and monogamy, images and imperialism" [7]), so that "as long as religion is not substantially defined (the Author means: in relation to its own object), it is impossible to trace its borders". And further he observes: "Similarly, if communism, or baseball, or the stockmarket are of ultimate concern to some society, or to one of its constituent social groups, they are, by definition, sacred. But beliefs concerning communism, baseball, or the stockmarket are not, by definition, religious beliefs, because they have no reference to superhuman beings" [8]). And herewith Spiro introduces his "substantive" definition of religion, whose necessary key-element is "faith in the existence of superhuman beings" [9]).

We do not keep ourselves up with this definition, which is certainly very pertinent, and in any case much more legitimate than others, partly similar, that have been expressed during the past century (especially Tylor's: "faith in spiritual beings"). Be it enough for us to stress one of Spiro's incoherencies: while he rightly refuses to use the attribute of "religious" for phenomena whose categorial pertaining clearly differs from religion, such as for *communism* or, more clearly, for *baseball*, he fails to use the same caution with the term "sacred". This he uses instead—be it only in a hypothetical or paradoxical way—in a rather "analogous" meaning, or even in a substantially equivocal meaning of something that is intouchable, important, out of common, something that carries away, that is not to be discussed, something that implies an "ultimate concern": an expression which, in Spiro, looses the real meaning that Tillich had given to it when first using it.

Of course, other and less banal examples could be given of an improper and equivocal use, or at any case of a most problematic use of the term "religion": for ex. in talking of a "religion of the fatherland", "of liberty", "of humanity", of "sacred values", etc. (which has nothing to do with the effective existence of religions of a "national style", with cults of the "polis", etc., although in some cases a *certain* continuity could be supposed, though always in the context of a *metabasis eis allo genos*).

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[7]) In M. Banton (ed.), *Anthropological approaches to the study of religion*, London 1966, p. 90.

[8]) *Op. cit.*, p. 96.

[9]) Cf. *op. cit.*, p. 91, 94, 96, and 98.

And thus we are brought back to a difficulty wherefrom it seems difficult to escape: "It is obvious", says Spiro, "that while a definition cannot take the place of inquiry, in the absence of definitions there can be no inquiry—for it is the definition, either ostensive [10]) or nominal [11]), which designates the phenomenon to be investigated" [12]). And Spiro continues observing how right Evans-Pritchard is when he requires that each generalization be founded on particular previous conclusions. Evans-Pritchard affirms that in the frame of a research-work "one must not ask 'what is religion?', but what are the main features of, let us say, the religion of one Melanesian people"; and afterwards, comparing the results of the researches on various peoples of this part of the world, we will get at generalizations about a Melanesian religion *in toto* [13]). But, apart from the obvious statement that such a type of research is already in practice in Ethnology—(we mean the method aiming at defining the cultural areas, as a method that keeps in mind the historiographical requirements of individualizing ambients and historical concrete contexts, in order to widen the conclusions, step by step, on a comparative and inductive basis)—we must also observe that from his point of view Spiro marks his step in noting that, if the scholar does not know "ostensively [14]), what religion is, how can our anthropologist in his Melanesian society know which, among a possible *n*, observations, constitute observations of religious phenomena, rather than of some other phenomenal class, kinship, for example, or politics?" And we feel that he is not absolutely wrong here, although this reasoning of his through categories or classes may in fact hurt against the organic complexity of the phenomena. As we have seen, an essential element of religion, that allows to ascribe a fact to one category and not to others, is instead—according to Spiro—the belief in super-human good and evil beings. Besides, he observes, nothing implies that a definition of religion, resulting from a comparative research, must necessarily reflect facts that are universally spread over the world: i.e. that religion "must" be a universal phenomenon

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10) "Unless he knows, ostensively, what religion is..."; *op. cit.*, p. 90. "To define a word ostensively is to point to the object which that word designates" (p. 87).

11) "Nominal definitions are those in which a word, whose meaning is unknown or unclear, is defined in terms of some expression whose meaning is already known". *Op. cit.*, p. 85. This is akin to verbal definition and internationally standardized conventional definition (which on the other hand could easily be crypto-ideological).

12) *Op. cit.*, p. 90, cf. p. 89.

13) *Op. cit.*, p. 90.

14) Cf. supra, n. 10.

proper to any civilization and to any human society [15]). On the contrary, the study of its real diffusion would give to any research a sense of major historical concreteness. And element of comparison here is to Spiro the usual one: the case of Buddhism of the Small Vehicle, of 'atheist' Buddhism,—though Spiro does not fail to note that in the very Small Vehicle itself there are elements of faith in superhuman beings; and Buddha himself would be one of these, that realize the definition of the religion he proposes (while the remaining would be "philosophy").

But we believe that this marks the limits of validity of the definition and of the methodology suggested by Spiro. As a matter of fact, if on the one hand it is perfectly coherent, or rather it is a requisite of a historical-positive research not to presuppose any universality or any *a priori* necessity, or co-extention with history of whatever phenomenon —in this case religion—, on the other hand the application of a rigid definition risks to break those tissues, those solidarities, that exist *in re* and are determinant: for ex. historical and objective solidarity between Buddhism and Indian upanishadic speculation, precedent and contemporary to it. And this solidarity does not concern those beliefs that even in the Small Vehicle may correspond to Spiro's definition, but concerns the substance itself of Buddhist preaching, the loosening of worldly chains in a freemaking that is a form of absoluteness, which for this very reason is implied in an atmosphere which is religious [16]), and could not cease to be so not even if some elements of it—though at their turn being essential, such as a doctrine of the soul and of Divinity—would come to vary or even, in extreme cases, would come to lack. Rather, if the Small Vehicle radicalizes, in a certain way, certain aspects of the upanishadic speculation, that are essential aspects of it and which nobody would intend to eliminate from the religious horizont of the Indian speculation, one cannot see how this radicalization of a categorial religious motive could end in a phenomenon that be categorically extraneous to religion. And herewith we do not intend to affirm that " it is impossible to walk out of religion", and that any result of speculations and religious beliefs should be a new form of

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15) *Op. cit.*, p. 88. As for the other aspects touched upon by Spiro, and his conclusions (which we are far from sharing) they lie outside our scope, and do not pertain to the field of the History of Religions. They owe to psychologistic reductionism.

16) On the other hand, it would be methodologically inaccurate to imply that "loosening of the world chains" and "absolute" are *as such* and *sine addito* specifically "religious" concepts.

religion: it would be enough to consider certain aspects of the Greek philosophy, or the Sensism of Illuminism period. But in these last cases what is decisive, even if they maintain the Supreme Being or introduce the goddess Reason, is the insertion of a new interest, of new values, of a new concept of the world, opposite to the ancient one; whereas in the case of Buddhism the continuity with respect to certain basic formulations, formed by the doctrines of the *karma*, of the *moksha* and the *Nirvana*, is essential, no matter the importance of the innovatory element, that may be felt as heretical and perhaps even atheistic by India itself, where Buddhism has been rejected, but which other countries have been ready to agree with and to render co-acceptable with the most various traditional religious expressions.

Moreover it would be strange for Buddhism to be valued in its quality of "religion", properly and only in value of its rather secondary elements instead of its basic inspiration.

This brings us back to what we started with; the problems of a definition of religion may be solved only in a dialectical manner: dialectics which should unite the two requirements, over and above any theoretical impasse: the requirement to possess already a certain idea of religion when we are studying the "religious" concepts and practices of humanity, and the need for us not to take our start from preconceived and theoretical definitions, but to construct rather a definition basing ourselves on an inductive and positive enquiry. What is important is to have an adequate idea of these "dialectics": it should not be reduced to the admission of an operative definition of religion limited to a working hypothesis, a conventional definition, or only a heuristic one: i.e. a hypothesis that should base itself on the research on such phenomena that happen to have in common *whatever*—be it only exterior—common feature.

At this point it is clear that the problem of a definition of religion is not the problem of an *a priori* selection of the facts to which research should be extended, and of which others should be left aside instead (or only considered as a frame, context, or outline). Better to say, it is not a matter of a merely horizontal problem, but of one of penetration; what matters is to understand the real connection between the problem of definition and the problem of a method of research; to understand *how* to build a definition and, in the same time, how to acquire an adequate knowledge of the object.

Thus, this relation between the definition or concrete, progressive

(in the real meaning of the word) research of the definition, and the progress (or, the "methodos", which means etymologically the same) of the research, is essential. And this suggests the question of what this method must be: should it be a "phenomenological" method, or rather a typological or morphological one, or should it be a historical method, or some combination of both.

It is probable that the method should not be restricted to a typology, morphology or phenomenology that presuppose a concept of religion as something already defined; and this for the reasons already mentioned above. In case, it should touch a typological method able to individualize various types of religion and which could describe, and catalogue, their affinities or differences, to reach a view of those partly unitary and partly different, that is, of those "analogous" things, that are "religions". But in this case, not only do we obtain for result a series of motionless pictures, in a certain way void of life and concrete motivation, but we also have to face quite some difficulties to intend the connections, the relations of contiguity, the very reasons themselves and the meaning of connection between the ones and the others. And before anything else one should question the legitimity of the choice of "that" particular unitarian point of view, of "that" distinctive of "religion" (for ex. the "sacred", or the belief in superhuman beings, or similar) that has allowed to catalogue together or to list these phenomena instead of others; now, this would bring back to the impasse of a definition that would at the same time be existent and yet to be done. If instead we should keep to the dialectic of the cognitive process destined to form a concrete, inductive definition of the religious facts,—to the process, the "method", capable of knowing these very facts,—we must also make sure that these dialectic does not center only on the affinities purely resulting from a decomposing and recomposing operation of elements of belief and practice. I.e., we must cure that the acquisition, through experience, of phenomena that were foreign to the basic culture of the scholar, be, at the same time, the extention of the historiographic experience of the same scholar. And this, to say the truth, is no easy job, due also to the documentation on hand; nor, for the same reasons, are the typological inquiries we were talking of above, deprived of any kind of merit.

History of *Religions* is a science which, different from *Social Anthropology*, be it Evans-Pritchard's or Spiro's, is not only interested in the study of functions, structures and definitions, but also in the study

of a category for which Anglo-Saxon science, after the inadequate tryings of people as Tylor and Morgan, has lost most of its interest: the historical category of genesis and development. The problems about genesis and development do not end with the study of philologically proven relations between one fact and another, between one document and another, or in the study of phenomena of cultural diffusion or of "stimulus diffusion". Without excluding from history creativity or individuality (and even *Einmaligkeit*), those problems may extend themselves to what we call a "historical typology", that discovers an analogy of historical answers to an analogy of situations and "expectations" or "demands", and this in the frame of a *Weltgeschichte* that results from such processes which take place on the same planet among the same humanity.

To give an idea of this historical problematic that is bound to the questions of "analogy" and of "historical typology of religion", we refer to the well-known distinction between "ethnical" religions and "founded" religions. The former, such as the Etruscan religion or the Greek, or the Aztec or Egyptian ones, are part of a civilization and of a culture, wherewith they rise (*in their fact as well as in the knowledge* the scholar gets of them), and wherewith sooner or later they are bound to disappear (more or less relatively, as they do partly survive in the sensitivity or in the experience of the related peoples, even when they are explicitly refused by them). The "founded" religions, on their part, owe their existence to the sufficiently emerging ("emerging" in the reality of things *and* in the knowledge that the scholar acquires of it) individuality of a founder, naturally within the context (at least at their start and first affirmation) of a culture and a history.

Another example of what we intend with "historical typology of religions", for a typology of religious histories, is the frequently mentioned example of polytheism: that is, the study of the historical circumstances in which polytheism was born, in various civilizations (circumstances that may happen in many places, although apparently —often—due to the presence of demonstrable historical influences or stimuli). In fact, polytheisms usually appear with superior old civilizations (although some of them, such as the Japanese one, are still alive), in relation with the rising of cities, states, empires, with specific sanctuaries and priesthoods and with a parallel development of social, political and sacral institutions that are such as to match with the organization of a polytheistic cult.

Similar researches of a historical typology—that do not exclude

nor presuppose hypotheses of diffusion, although they are necessarily interested to them—are possible for other forms of culture and religion also, such as for ex. the archaic ethnological cultures of hunters and collectors, with certain rather constant and typical forms of belief and religious practice (hunting rites, tribal initiation, etc.). And all this—we repeat—without exclusion of those problems of cultural diffusion that do remain an essential object of the historical-comparative research, in the sense of a historical-cultural enquiry.

To conclude with, we shall say that History of Religions faces a quantity of historical processes, of well settled contexts of belief and practice, of religious "worlds" that are more or less compact, even if more or less intercommunicating. Those "worlds" on the one hand seem to correspond to a common human behaviour, a behaviour which we call "religious", and herewith prove a more or less evident "analogy" among themselves; but on the other hand they prove to be so very dissimilar among them that a good part of history and phenomenology of religions must be dedicated to establish a classification and, possibly, a historical and typological ramification of them.

This frequently results in a problem of "historical typology" in the above explained meaning and in problems of historical (and not only phenomenological) "continuity and discontinuity", such as is the case with the above mentioned relations between upanishadic soteriology and Buddhism. In this case we have a "continuity" that does not prevent that phenomenon of novelty, of creativity, of religious revolution, and thus of discontinuity, that is so evident in the "founded" religions. But the "analogy" we were talking of above, puts a vaster problem, as it seems to extend to all the forms of religion. Such an "analogy", obviously, does not only mean a partial affinity and a partial divergence of "content" between religions, or a divergence in the way these could "combine" elements that are apparently or really common; but it means also a diversity in forms, in quality. I.e.: the "religions" are not all religions in the same meaning of this term (and this renders a positive definition of the concept of religion in the frame of History of Religions and in Phenomenology of Religion rather difficult). In other words, the religions are no "species" of a "genus" that would precisely be religion. Which is to say that, contrary to what happens for the genera and the species, we cannot say that, in the different "religions", a *genus* (a general kind) "religion" is present *in its whole*, taken in a univocal meaning, that may be verified for each single religion (as for example "animal" for all zoological

species). Such attempts to identify a lowest common denominator of all the religions, an attempt to identify a basis for belief and for a behaviour common to all of them, must necessarily fail, as cases of animism and the theory of the *mana* teach us. And false are the connected attempts, that evolutionistic History of Religions has made, to identify mana or animism with the *nux*, the embryon or historical origin of religion.

But to state the "analogous" character of the concept of religion will on the other hand mean to state the existence of a common "family ambiance", or "common aspects", between various religious forms (that actually render religious people mutually more sensitive — which at times may also mean to put them in a more marked contrast); although this statement could not impose itself by mere intuition nor—even less—could it do so by an unreflected "participation" of the scholar (and even the reference to concepts such as *Erlebnis* is liable to quite some reservation).

As far as the contents of religion or eventual common contents are concerned, once the misunderstanding of the "least common denominator", or of the "nucleus" common to all religions, is eliminated (that would not give proper account and reason to any religion, and would instead harm all of them as it would deprive them of their typical essence), these contents will be enquired principally on the basis of researches of historical continuity and discontinuity of a type similar to the ones mentioned above for Buddhism; or with researches on those continuity and discontinuity that we may find among religions that have parallelly developed in different but contiguous cultural milieus; or even on the basis of such a "historical typology" that was mentioned above about the "higher polytheistic cultures", or the archaic hunters' cultures. To be sure, other researches of a typological nature, aiming at discovering solidary types of belief and practice, i.e. "structures" (in the sense of a phenomenology of religion), prove to be very useful for a positive enquiry on religion and religions; but this only in case they prove not to remain indifferent to the historical problematic and as long as they undergo a philological checking of any eventual data and conclusions they get to.

Herewith a history of religions that includes also the right instances of phenomenology of religion fills a space that would otherwise be empty (and destined to be filled in an improper way) between a phenomenology of religion intuitive and too open to generalization, with a surrounding of implications that are not all scientifically

valid (and at times manifesting some remainder of evolutionism), and a philology or a historiography that, dedicated to the study of single cultural milieus, would be reluctant of any comparison, and of any more vast horizont and any historical typology.

Finally, in this case, the judge of rights will be the fact itself. If, in their historical-comparative studies, the historians of religions will spur the philologians to new notions; or if they will show the existence of relations unknown before, between things or phenomena; or if they will give evidence of aspects neglected before, or of values and significations never explored before or even denied; finally, if they only suggest problems that nobody had thought of before, then they will (and surely they have often done so) have proven the scientific legitimacy of their discipline. Nor could one object that they have reached such acquirements only through their single philological capacities and for the field to which these refer; because these problems and acquirements often possess a far wider extension than that of any discipline related to a single people or a single cultural milieu.

This goes also for the problem of categorial "autonomy of religion", an autonomy which is affirmed *a priori* in Phenomenology of Religion, but may be better explained, as a problem, by History of Religions, that —due to its purely historical-positive nature—should not fall into suspicion of philosophical or theological (or anti-theological) presuppositions. Besides, History of Religions is obliged by its very nature of philologically meticulous and historically probe research to run through and enlightenen all the aspects, the turns and the meanings of the object in question, and this without biases or inclinations, except that of an open interest (a "sympathy", in the sense of a scientifically proven human interest) that renders a "comprehension" more easy, though distinct from a "judgement of value". In one word, we mean a research that is documented but no slave to disattentive documentarism, and which is not slave to equally improper "reductionistic" formulations, sociological and psychological ones, that use to select facts and aspects for the sake of aprioristic, arbitrary theories. Thus to History of Religions "categorial autonomy" of religion will signify primarily a problem, not an *a priori* concept which would be foreign to the positive-inductive nature of this science, nor, perhaps, a conclusion reached once and for all and valid for every successive research. But some kind of open research, as the one we hinted at above, will in any case warrant that no essential element be forgotten or empoverished through a conscious selection or option made *a priori*; i.e. that everything will

have been valued. And this is the only methodological warrant that may be required from a historian. If this will have been done, then religion will certainly appear to us as an experience *sui generis*, and a wider historical knowledge of its forms will but render us more expert in discovering the variety, complexity and deepness of its references, be it in those religions that are more close to the basic culture of the historian, be it then in the more "exotic" ones (related to time and space). And, last but not least, this knowledge will avoid losing (or failing to get) precious information about facts and human experience that it would be injust and harmful for us to ignore, in such an epoch as ours, an epoch of the world's cultural unification and of a reciprocal knowledge of individuals and civilizations.

DISCUSSION

BOLGIANI. — I would like to ask my colleague Ugo Bianchi to clarify a few points. First of all, in his paper he used the terms "analogy" and "analogous" in a religious sense, and more especially, "analogous" and "analogy" in a comparative religio-historical context. I would like to have some clarification from him on what he means by these expressions "analogy" and "analogous" applied to the fields of religious history and methodology: they could in fact have a very significant critical importance.

My second point. I have the impression, if it is not mistaken, that Bianchi used such expressions as "typology" and "phenomenology" rather indiscriminately, when it seems to me that in the current state of "religious sciences" we cannot purely and simply equate them. To set the bounds of the problem correctly it strikes me that we ought to distinguish between "typology", "morphology" and even "phenomenology" of religions. To reduce religious phenomenology simply to a "typology" of religions does not seem to me to be entirely right: indeed I feel that it entails the risk of confusion and misunderstanding. This clarification appears to me also to be useful in view of the forthcoming discussion on Professor Bleeker's paper.

My third point. Talking about the problem of the relationship between, on the one hand, "higher cultures" and "literate civilisations", and on the other, "so-called inferior cultures" or "illiterate ones", Bianchi spoke, with particular reference to the differing historico-cultural dynamics of both groups, of "superior" cultures in the sense of "ulterior". A clearer statement on the term "ulterior" applied to a

culture hitherto called "superior" (and in fact to a "hot civilisation" as opposed to a "cold" one, to use a term now fashionable) could perhaps assist in some way an anthropological analysis of the problem, and ultimately the historico-religious methodology involved: so I would like to ask Bianchi to give us some further details on this matter.

My fourth point. Here I am dealing not with individual aspects of Bianchi's paper, but with the paper in general, and particularly with the question (which in its time was also one of the problems dear to Pettazzoni) of the "autonomous" value of religion, which could also be defined as the "specific" character of religion. Does it have any meaning for Bianchi to speak of an "essence" of religion? Does this "autonomy" of religion we hear of bring us down to what some have fundamentally called the "religious *a priori*", or are we in fact dealing with a value which is only "autonomous" inasmuch as we can give it an appropriate and sufficient historical description? Or again, is it a case of a historiographic category which is more conventional than anything else? This clarification strikes me as especially important if we want to base, as Bianchi clearly does, our history of religion on comparative methods: by this I mean true *history*, and thus subject to historiography in its real sense, and not "history" in the particular sense the term has acquired, for instance, in the *Traité d'histoire des religions* by Mircea Eliade. In this work, as is well known, there is absolutely nothing "historical", in the historico-historiographical sense; and what is more significant—and seems to have escaped many readers, whether supporters or opponents of Eliade—is the somehow "unassailable" position which Eliade takes up towards history. Let me give an example: when in his *Traité d'histoire des religions*, on the subject of the ambivalence of the sun, Eliade quotes the Vedic variant of the sun god Sāvītrī, and points out that the nature of his mission without doubt reflects the attributes belonging to the sun god in primitive societies, he is careful and prudent enough to indicate that he is not talking about "historical relationships" but of typological symmetry. And he adds: that before the history, evolution, diffusion and transformations of hierophany there comes a basic structure of hierophany; and he maintains that it serves no fundamental purpose trying to establish *to what extent* the structure of a hierophany was grasped, and that it is enough to distinguish between that which had some meaning, and that which can have none. Using this sort of criteria we can even end up by declaring that historical illustration is secondary and irrelevant, since given a hierophany of known structure, we can already state what is

and will be significant about it, as opposed to what will not be. This type of morphology makes history (inasmuch as the legacy of the past) entirely superfluous and opens on to the study of the religious "futurology". But setting aside here the case of Eliade (which here is nothing more than an instance of a particular use of religious "a priori") I believe that it is necessary for those very people like Bianchi who want to remain within the area of the history, albeit comparative, of religions, to specify the meaning contained in the phrase "autonomous value" of religion as an object of historico-religious study.

BIANCHI. — I am grateful to my friend Bolgiani for his remarks that confirm this paradoxical truth, namely that sometimes more attention and critical analysis is paid to a paper by scholars owing to a different methodological approach, than by others. In fact, Prof. Bolgiani did touch some items which I consider basic in my exposition.

As for the 'analogous' meaning of the concepts 'religion' and 'religious', I was referring to the meaning of the term 'analogy' in the logics (i.e., what is not 'univocal' nor 'aequivocal'; analogous are those phenomena which are not merely species of a genus but have somewhat in common, though they essentially differ for part of their respective contents or from other points of view).

How can a historian of religions give the name of "religions" to certain things which he studies and which do not originally belong to his experience as a man? How is it possible for us to call—or not to call (here is the problem)—Hīnayāna Buddhism, "religious"? I see it as follows—and I believe a colleague of mine, Vittorio Lanternari, to be of the same opinion in this. Just like any normal person the historian of religions takes his start from his own experience, whenever he starts an enquiry over things that he did not know before. Whatever he will find in them, that he feels partially akin and somehow familiar with his own experience or knowledge of what in his culture is named "religion" or "religious", this he will go on calling "religious", but this time with an "analogous" meaning of the word. It is only this way of escaping the difficulty, by the use of the historical-comparative method, that will allow us to solve a definitional (not only terminological) *impasse* which puzzles other scientifical milieus as well,—for ex. Social Anthropology—and that has not been and could not be otherwise solved. In other words, the only way to avoid the historical and typological problems implied in the use of the term "religion" is to enter into the dynamic vision of the historical thought, i.e. to face—with an always growing historiographical experience—the par-

tial heterogeneity of the facts and of the historical processes which are the object of our study. Thus we remain conscious of the complexity and variety—which is precisely 'analogy'—of these historical facts and processes we are prepared to call 'religious'; only when we possess enough experience are we entitled to give a positive, historical and phenomenological, content to the term 'religious'.

And here I pass to the second item. Some historians of religions have a certain tendency to use terms such as 'typology', 'phenomenology' and 'morphology' with a promiscuous meaning. The only distinction that is frequently made is this: when we talk of typology here in Italy we think of certain obsolete polemics with historicism, that was ignoring 'History of Religions' for the reasons given above. When we mention phenomenology we especially think of scholars such as Wach, Van der Leeuw and Bleeker; when we mention morphology then our mind goes especially to Eliade.

I agree that there is no interest in reducing phenomenology to typology. But what I would like to say is that one should not require the historian of religions to enter into philosophical quarrels with Heidegger; this is why the historian of religions should not be expected to discuss about phenomenology with technical terms and in harmony with Heidegger's philosophy; and even Prof. Bleeker agrees with this in his papers on religious phenomenology. Nevertheless, within the frame of that particular phenomenology—not strictly intended in the technical Heideggerian sense—it is a fact that when scholars talk of phenomenology, they mostly refer to so-called 'structures' or 'systems' wherein they make those phenomena fit and have a 'meaning'. But how could we delineate these 'structures' (or, as we prefer to put it, 'religious worlds'), were it not by means of positive and inductive, historical research? That is, by means of a research considering not only the internal, structural or functional equilibrium of those 'systems', but also the dynamic and the circumstances of their development and—as far as it is possible to detect—of their origins.

Now since, in my opinion, phenomenology, as we understand it here, is often hinting too empirically or too intuitively at 'meaning', 'structure', 'system' or 'whole', I prefer to speak of typology. But I do admit that there is a certain tendency to mix the terms, and use them indifferently.

As far as the third item is concerned: the concept of 'superior' and 'ulterior'. The higher cultures are 'superior', but obviously not in the sense of an evaluation of moral or civil or other merits, but rather in

the sense of a development, of a cultural-historical complexity, of a certain type of historical process, which is superior for being more complex, for its being 'ulterior', with reference to other cultural achievements or types. And this without dropping into "evolutionism". Thus a 'higher culture', a 'superior' culture, is the cultural achievement of a society which, at a given moment, has "taken its flight" and has started a chain reaction, a multiplication of cultural experiences by geometrical progression, that is proper to the cultural progress of the so-called superior cultures; it is obvious that in this meaning of the word 'higher' or 'superior', such a culture will be 'superior' and 'ulterior' to those other cultures that were not involved in this historical phenomenon, in this process, and are thus still 'anterior', and, in this sense—historically relative and not offensive, I hope—'inferior' or 'primitive'. And this remains true even when a few rather recently formed 'inferior' cultures are concerned: here we apply to the concept of historical typology (see *Anthropos* 63/64, 1968/69, pp. 852-857).

Fourth item: The 'autonomous' value of religion. Here I split a little from Pettazzoni's opinion (and this may seem strange when our respective backgrounds are to be considered). I believe that the historian of religions should not base his work and his interpretations on the previous assumption of an 'autonomous' value of religion, intended as a general and constitutive category of the spirit, i.e. as a philosophical, gnoseological and ontological '*a priori*', at least not at the beginning of his research work. Nor should he apply to opposite assumptions, i.e. reductive (psychological or sociological) criteria of interpretation, or feel engaged—as a few historians of religions do nowadays, even in this Country—to equivocally philosophical-historical prophecies about a 'death' of religion. The only thing he should do is to study the facts with a positive-inductive method. It will only be at the end of his research, and due to the positive historical kind of work gone through, that he will be entitled to propose more or less ascertained conclusions over dynamisms and current evolutions, or historical-typological generalizations, or to propose historical judgements about the anthropological and historical-cultural radicality of religion and the meaning of the immense geographical diffusion of the same. This is as much as the historian will be able to contribute to the argument in question. As far as Eliade is concerned, it is obvious that he poses religion as an *a priori*, were it then an *a priori* that is suffering a crisis in our contemporary world. And I feel that he coincides in his interpretation of the trends of modern Western world with the analyses of

absolute 'secularists', except that Eliade considers this crisis negatively, as an enormous "loss of the center".

But to me Eliade's position seems strongly phenomenologistic and even psychologistic, arbitrarily generical, i.e. not taking into due consideration that, factually as well as conceptually, "religion" and "religious" are not univocal terms, but do correspond to different, though partially related, realities; that is to different *genomena* and dynamisms, in the complex frame of human evolution and history. Not less general and arbitrary are the positions of those secularists with whom Eliade polemizes, but with whom he greatly agrees when he instaures an opposition between a 'religious' world of yesterday and a modern tendentially "non-religious" world. Finally as to the 'archetype' and 'hierophany', I must refer, for the sake of brevity, to the chapter on Eliades' thought in my forthcoming book "The History of Religions" (in the Supplements to *Numen*).

DHAVAMONY. — I would like to raise only two points briefly. The word 'historical', and the meaning of 'historical comparative method'. What does Prof. Bianchi understand by 'history'? Does it mean a narrative history (histoire historisante), or a history such as is done by 'historiens-sociologues', who find organisms, patterns, models, types of events, and so on? Because by mixing these two meanings of 'historical' one also mixes, it seems to me, the two meanings of the word 'phenomenological': the mere historical structure of a phenomenon and the meaning behind this structure, which can be obtained only in the context of different patterns and generalities. The second question is that by making use of the historical-comparative method you arrive at the meaning of the religious fact in as far as it is historical and cultural, because a religious fact is also historical and cultural; at least it is an event taking place in a particular culture and period. But does it really —the historical-comparative method—does it really get the religious fact *as religious*? That is the point of Eliade's saying that the historical comparative method, in as far as it is a cultural, ethnological quest, arrives at a historical fact *qua* historical, *qua* cultural, *qua* ethnological, but not *qua* religious, *qua* sacred. How can your method bring this aspect of the sacred *qua* sacred?

BIANCHI. — My point in order to defend the historical-comparative method as *the* method of the History of Religions is the following. By history I mean the study of genesis and development, that is the

study of concrete and individual processes which took place in time and space. These are religious processes—that is they do concern the religious nature of the facts considered—, naturally in the context of an 'analogous' appreciation of the terms 'religion' and 'religious' (cf. supra). By this we escape at the same time the mere descriptive, narrative, 'philological' meaning of the concept of 'history', as well as the merely sociological meaning of same. As for Eliade's concept of the quality 'religion': as I have pointed out in my answer to the preceding question, what I wouldn't like to accept is his concept of religion and religious (or the 'sacred') as a conceptual *a priori*, as a category, carrying a general, universal and univocal meaning of 'religion'. This is questionable also in the field of a true phenomenology of religion and of a 'science of religion', as well as in a history of religions. In my opinion, in so far as these religious disciplines are concerned (not e.g. in the case of theology, which benefits from its conceptual own sources and categories) 'religion' and 'religious' are historically and phenomenologically 'analogous' concepts, to be elicited by a philological, inductive, positive research in the field of what happened in time and space.

DHAVAMONY. — Thank you for the clarification that you do not admit Eliade's sense of religious as a category. Then the objection is serious from the point of view of distinguishing of what is religious and what is not religious, the profane. Because the historical and the comparative method analyses a fact, which is also common to the profane aspect of such a fact. For instance, how do you distinguish a profane faith from a religious faith, or in certain ideas of ceremony, religious ceremony from a social ceremony? A royal ceremony, e.g. coronation.

BIANCHI. — I must repeat that a distinction feasible for the History of Religions, between what is religious and what is not religious, as in the instance of a coronation, cannot be based on a theoretical definition of 'religion' and 'religious' previous to the research work, which is historical and comparative-historical work. All depends here upon a consistent use of the 'analogy' criterium. There is a dialectic between the 'form' (which is historical-comparative, extending to all that appears in 'continuity', even if partial, with what was already known as 'religious') and the very content of the research itself. Of course, to evaluate the reality, the limits and the *ratio* of that continuity, in order

to exclude pseudo-religious or para-religious phenomena, may prove frequently to be difficult, and calls for a special sensitivity to all aspects of the facts considered (which does not mean as much as intuitionism, again a form of the discarded phenomenologism). Thus, a historical and phenomenological definition of religion is always *in fieri*, in connexion with the extension of the experience of the scholar (which does not mean theoretical or programmatic relativism).

GNOLI. — Prof. Bianchi has talked about 'ethnical religions' and 'founded religions'. Now, I believe that this distinction, which I made use of myself, because it is handy, should be given its true value: is it a distinction of opportunity, or something more? I mean that, if the 'founded religions' are those for which we may in fact consider the personality of a historical founder, as with Islam, will the 'ethnical religions' not be simply those whose origins are dwelling in a reality which, in the actual condition of our knowledge, are not to be historically grasped? Otherwise, we would be compelled to make a typological distinction between what is 'ethnical' and what is 'founded', with every problem this distinction would raise. In other words, in this case we should, without any doubt, accept the phenomenological point of view, and we should necessarily apply, for the 'ethnical religions', to the idea of a spontaneous and inconscious production of aspects and fundamental contents of the religious experience. As far as the criticism is concerned that is addressed to a certain type of historicism, we must agree that it is impossible to establish an a priori category for 'religion' or for 'religious'. We may, in case, discuss over the opportunity to ascribe religious experience to the ethical category, as with Croce's historicism, but we cannot deny that it is impossible to presuppose a category by itself for religion. The only way to study religion is to frame it in the general frame of history, were it then of course with the help of all those instruments and materials that doubtlessly help to a better study of the religious facts, beyond those philosophical and ideological presuppositions they are located in.

BIANCHI. — As to the first point, whether the concepts of 'ethnical' and 'founded' religions are categories of cognition or of reality, in my opinion they are both. They are tied by a kind of dialectical connexion, in the ambit of the historical thought and in the course of historical research. In other words, in most cases those religions for which the name and the figure of an historical personality of founder cannot be

grasped by historical research, are also those religions which are best understood as integrating parts of a socio-cultural whole, whose history and vicissitudes they share, while the dynamics of a founded religion, though not always proving supra-national, are very different. As to the second point: as I answered to Prof. Bolgiani (cf. supra), it is precisely my opinion that the historian of religions could not start with the assumption of an *a priori* category of religion and religious, both in the cognitive (a previous, theoretical definition of religion) and the phenomenological or ontological realms (religion as an atemporal essence). The religious-historical and scientific elaboration of the concept and, possibly, of an autonomous category of 'religion' and of 'religious' will be the consequence of the historical-comparative research, with the aid of the concepts of 'analogy' and of 'historical typology' I tried to elucidate in my paper. It is clear that not only the affirmation of an *a priori* category of religion is to be avoided *as starting point* for the historical research, but also the opposite methodological presupposition, i.e. reductionism (psychological, sociological or otherwise).

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THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF RELIGION TO THE STUDY OF THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

In his wellknown "Essays on the History of Religions" Raffaele Pettazzoni, the grand master of the study of the history of religions, has published a treatise on "The monstruous figure of Time in Mithraism". He characterizes the figure as a monster "which devours and consumes everything". This description is not only applicable to the idea of time in Mithraism. Time has been and still is conceived by all men in all ages as an all-devouring monster. Time exerts this destructive action not least in the world of the scholars. No fame, how loudly praised, stands its ground against the destroying power of time. It is perplexing how soon scholars, who during their life have been crowned by the laurel wreath of a great renown, are totally forgotten. The younger generation does not any longer know their names and their works. It is as if their glorious carreer did not leave any track behind. Anybody who knows the consuming force of time at the same time realizes the significance of Pettazzoni as student of the history of religions. This symposium testifies to it. This gathering is not so much a reunion of good friends of the deceased who try to keep his memory artificially alive. It is first of all a testimony to his lasting importance. Ten years after his death the religio-historical theses of Pettazzoni are still of the same current interest as at the time when he formulated them in the sense that they stimulate to a critical reassessment of the problems which he tried to solve.

Which are these theses? It is not my task today to present a full description of the ideas and the merits of Pettazzoni. For an assessment of Pettazzoni's work I may refer to the excellent article of Dario Sabbatucci in *Numen*, Vol. X, Fasc. 1. For the moment I must restrict myself to his ideas about the principles of the study of the science of religion and about the relation between that science and the phenomenology of religion.

In regard to the first point Pettazzoni has rendered us a great service by stating clearly and emphatically that by their nature the religious phenomena should be the subject of a separate science. In the

article on "History and Phenomenology in the Science of Religion", inserted in his "Essays", he says: "The peculiar nature, the very character, of religious facts as such give them the right to form the subject of a special science. That science is the science of religion in the proper sense of the words, the essential character of religious facts is the necessary and sufficient reason for its existence. This science cannot be philological nor archaeological nor anything else. Nor can it be the sum total of the particular facts studied by philology, archaeology, ethnology and so on. Its definition in contrast to these various sciences is not a matter of quantity, but of quality, being connected with the special nature of the data which constitute its subject-matter". These words contain the Magna Charta of the science of religion. By a logical argument they vindicate the independent character of that science, namely by stating that religious facts undeniably have an unique nature and that they therefore should become the subject of a science which possesses the apparatus, required for a thorough elucidation of religious phenomena.

As to the second point, i.e. the relation of the history of religions to the phenomenology of religion Pettazzoni has formulated the question and he has also pointed out a possible solution, but he has not worked out the issue in detail. No wonder, for this really is a complicated problem. Pettazzoni could not fully master it, because he did not distinguish sharply enough the nature and the methods of the two disciplines. He has several times occupied himself with the subject. His most striking utterances are to be found in two articles, published respectively in *Numen*, Vol. I, Fasc. 1 and in *Numen*, Vol. VI, Fasc. 2. In both cases he aims at a confrontation with the phenomenological ideas of his colleague and friend Van der Leeuw, though the name of the latter is not mentioned in the second article.

In "Aperçu introductif" of *Numen*, Vol. I, Fasc. 1, in which he, as its editor, presents the new journal to its subscribers, he naturally also poses the problem in question. First of all he formulates the task of the history of religions as follows: "L'histoire des religions s'attache en premier lieu à établir l'histoire des différentes religions particulières... L'histoire des religions étudie les faits religieux dans leurs rapports historiques, non seulement avec d'autres faits religieux, mais aussi avec des faits non religieux, qu'ils soient littéraires ou artistiques ou sociaux etc.". Thereupon he asks whether there is no danger that the history of religions goes off the rails, by paying too much attention to non-religious factors so that it loses sight of the purely religious

sense of the phenomena. Next he remarks that the phenomenology of religion is meant to counterbalance such tendencies. He describes the nature of the latter science in the following words: "La phénoménologie religieuse ignore le développement historique de la religion ("von einer historischen "Entwicklung" der Religion weiss die Phänomenologie nichts": Van der Leeuw). Elle s'attache surtout à découper dans la multiplicité des phénomènes religieux les diverses structures. C'est la structure qui peut nous aider à déceler le sens des phénomènes religieux indépendamment de leur situation dans le temps et l'espace, de leur appartenance à un milieu culturel donné... La phénomenologie n'hésite pas à se poser en science sui generis essentiellement différente de l'histoire des religions ("Die Religionsphänomenologie ist nicht Religionsgeschichte": Van der Leeuw)". Thereupon Pettazzoni states that in this way arises "un dédoublement de la science des religions en deux sciences différents, l'une historique, l'autre phénoménologique". He regrets the dualism and he thinks that the flaw of the phenomenology of religion is that it neglects the historical development of the religious phenomena. He would prefer to treat both sciences as "deux instruments interdépendants de la même science, deux formes de la science des religions dont l'unité composite correspond à celle de son objet, c'est à dire la religion dans ses deux éléments distincts, l'expérience intérieure et les manifestations extérieures". Finally he wonders whether the dualistic system does not originate from "les débuts mêmes de la science des religions", i.e. "le dualisme génétique, les deux sources, provenant l'une de la théologie, l'autre des sciences humanistes". Should this supposition be right then he fears that many obstacles will have to be removed before the waters of the two sciences will merge into "le grand fleuve de l'histoire religieuse". These quotations prove that Pettazzoni sharply saw the relevant problems. It is questionable whether he fully understood the nature of the phenomenology of religion. In my opinion it is evident that he overlooked certain elements in the system of Van der Leeuw. His supposition about the origin of what he called the dualism in the science of religion from two sources, i.e. theology and humanistic sciences, is debatable, because it does not correspond with the historical facts—a thesis which, for lack of time I can not substantiate. At any rate Pettazzoni did not put the question of the relation of the two sciences involved as pointedly as it should be done. This is the reason why we now have to reopen the discussion about the matter.

But we ought first to pay attention to the important article on "Il

metodo comparativo" which Pettazzoni published in *Numen*, Vol. VI, Fasc. 1. He starts by sketching the procedure of the schoool which in Anglosaxon countries is called "comparative religion". Secondly he critically reviews the method of comparison as it is used by phenomenology of religion. His conclusion is again that the latter science neglects the idea of historical development. In his opinion the historical vista is indispensable to the science of religion and even more to the history of religions. Yet he frankly acknowledges the significance of the phenomenology of religion. His concern is, that the antithesis between the two sciences should be overcome, so that they combine their forces, and this in the sense that phenomenology of religion accepts the idea of the historical development and that the purely historical study does justice to the phenomenological notion of the autonomous value of religion. This attitude of reconciliation honours a great man like Pettazzoni, but does not give the solution of the problem at stake. This requires a thorough inquiry into the character of the two disciplines.

There can hardly be any difference of opinion about the character of the history of religions. It aims at what its name expresses, i.e. the study of the historical development of the religions of the past and the present, primarily of separate religions or of certain segments thereof. In order to reach a scholarly level, this study should be founded on knowledge of the sources of information, primarily of the texts. As students of the history of religions generally are only familiar with the language and the literature of a restricted number of religions, they hardly venture to set a foot outside the domain of their factual knowledge. It is therefore important to note that the phenomenologist has a weaker footing. In order to construct considerations about types and structures of religion, he is forced to use facts from different religions, facts which he accepts on the authority of experts without being able to control them. But even in the study of the history of religions it can happen that one handles pieces of second hand information. This is the case in the so called general history of religions which either deals with the problems of the relation of different religions or compares the one religion with the other. Thereby one easily transgresses the border of one's philological and historical knowledge. In this connection attention should be paid to the fact that often no distinction is made between the general history of religions and comparative religion. At the other hand some people do not distinguish comparative religion and phenomenology of religion though obviously the latter science is

based on a principle different from that of comparative religion. I have always advocated a clear distinction between the four sciences in question. The task of the history of religions as such needs no further comment. Comparative religion may compare religions at the best of its ability. This is an interesting job, but it is doubtful whether the results have not been overrated. It is more fruitful to seek for the unique characteristics of religious phenomena, because they tell what religion really means. In my opinion the situation should be greatly clarified if the general history of religions would confine its activity to the problems of the relationship of different religions within the scope of historical continuity.

These remarks pave the way for a consideration of the principle of the phenomenology of religion. However, therewith certain difficulties immediately arise, mainly resulting from the fact that there is no communis opinio about the nature and the aim of the science. Different conceptions exist. Different names are used. Within the scope of this lecture I feel released from the duty of presenting the history of the science in question, with references to all pertinent names of authors and of books. Let me only mention that the lacks of unity of opinion already existed in 1940, when Dr Eva Hirschmann wrote her still readable study on "Phänomenologie der Religion, Eine historisch-systematische Untersuchung von "Religionsphänomenologie" und "religionsphänomenologischer Methode" in der Religionswissenschaft". In this booklet she treats thirteen authors whom she classifies into three types, i.e. the purely descriptive, the philosophical-psychological and the strictly phenomenological type. Since 1940 phenomenology of religion passed through a further development which I, for lack of time, can not describe, though it can be easily stated that there is still no agreement about the nature and the task of the science. Also at the moment three types could be distinguished: 1) the descriptive school which is content with a systematisation of the religious phenomena, 2) the typological school, which aims at the research of the different types of religion, 3) the phenomenological school in the specific sense of the word, which makes inquiries into the essence, the sense and the structure of the religious phenomena.

The latter school deserves special attention, because its followers have reflected not only on the aim, but also on the method of the science. Thereby the word phenomenology gets a double meaning. It is on the one hand an independent science, creating monographs and more or less extensive handbooks. It means also a scholarly method, i.e. the

application of the principles of the so called epochè and of the eidetic vision. Epochè means suspension of judgement, in this case of the decision in regard to the question of the truth of religious phenomena. The concept indicates the attitude of impartiality, the attentive listening which is the absolute condition for a right understanding of the import of the religious phenomena. The eidetic vision is the research for the eidos, i.e. the essence and the structure of the religious facts. Both concepts are borrowed from the philosophical phenomenology of Husserl and his school, but are here used in the figurative sense. In this connection it should be remarked and even underlined that the phenomenological method can also be applied to the study of the history of religions. In my opinion it is even imperative that this method be applied when the historian of religions wants to reach valuable results. Thus to a certain extent the wish of Pettazzoni could be fulfilled: a happy cooperation can grow between the two sciences which may be useful for both parties: the history of religions will obtain its best results by applying the phenomenological method and the phenomenology of religions will be able to make reliable statements only when it uses material, provided by the best representatives of the history of religions.

However, it should not be forgotten that from the beginning objections have been lodged against the phenomenology of religion. Of late even its right of existence has again been disputed. Which are the objections? First its name has been criticized. For a double reason. It is said that the name creates confusion, because it is nearly like that of a wellknown school of philosophy. Moreover the name hampers the popularity of the science, because it puzzles the outsiders. More important is the remark, that the nature of the discipline could be better expressed by the name "comparative science of religion". For, phenomenologists apply the art of comparison in order to understand the religious value of even the most queer and exotic phenomena. Personally I prefer the traditional name and I am convinced that it should be an independent science. I am not afraid of the dualism in the study of religion, which Pettazzoni thought was condemnable. Actually there is not even question of a dualism, but at least of a quadripartite system. For, everyone who wants to make an all round study of religion must not only pursue history of religions, and phenomenology of religion, but should also seek the aid of psychology of religion and of sociology of religion. These four disciplines form a four in hand which, if droven in the right way, carries the study of religion to its true end.

After the principles of the phenomenology of religion have been sufficiently clarified, time has come to define its contribution to the history of religions more explicitly. The first step to reach this end is a description of the task of this science. This work can best be done in two phases: 1) in a negative way by stating what does not belong to its competence, 2) in a positive sense by presenting an articulate sketch of the work of the science.

In regard to the first point the phenomenology of religion would be greatly served if its scope of activities was clearly distinguished at the one side from that of the philosophical phenomenology and at the other hand from that of anthropology. In my opinion a vulnerable side of Van der Leeuw's phenomenology is that too many elements of the philosophical phenomenology have been incorporated into it, in the form of speculations about the deeper meaning of the concept: phenomenon. Thereby the phenomenology of religion transgresses the boundary of its competence. Any one who has had a serious talk with the followers of the school of Husserl or Heidegger, knows that much expert knowledge and even penetrating thinking is required to solve such questions. The student of the history of religions is a layman in this matter and he should refrain from meddling in these difficult affairs. Phenomenology of religion is no philosophy of religion, but a systematization of historical facts in order to grasp their religious value.

On the other hand the relation to anthropology should be clearly defined. And that because some phenomenologists think that religious phenomena can best be understood from the anthropological angle. In my opinion this is an error. However important the human factor may be for the actual shape of religious phenomena, religion as such, in whatever form it may appear, is always a relation to God or to the Holy. Decisive for the structure of religion is a certain notion of God and not the mentality of the people who are religious.

Thirdly the phenomenology of religion should keep its distance from all attempts to actualize the science, in the sense that it is supposed to have as its main object the promotion of worldpeace or the solution of practical problems of faith. Examples of this conception are easily given. Among the participants of each congress for the history of religions there are always people who think that the history and the phenomenology of religions are meant to further the better understanding among the nations and the creation of a religion of the future. Therein they are greatly mistaken. These sciences are bound to search

for the historical truth without caring about the results of these inquiries. In this connection also the considerations of Professor Goodenough which he published in *Numen*, Vol. VI, Fasc. 2 could be inserted. Goodenough was seeking for means to revive the study of the science of religion. In his opinion the essence of religion lays in the problem how man in his helplessness can live over against the great unknown, the tremendum. Most commonly man has screened himself off from the tremendum by mythical accounts and by rites. Or the individual has broken the mythical veil to face the numinous tremendum itself. In the opinion of Goodenough the science of religion should take a new attitude towards the tremendum, i.e. looking at it with quiet eyes, astonished, referent, but unafraid. This is an interesting and respectable standpoint, but it is no scholarly study of religion. It is an actualization of the science in question, kind of a philosophy of religion, and proper to a layman.

The second point which should be clarified, is a comprehensive description of the task of the phenomenology of religion. Here again the lack of uniformity of opinion makes itself painfully felt. However it is generally agreed that the activity of the phenomenology of religion is many sided. In these circumstances I can only present my own ideas, not as the last word of wisdom, but as an instance how the science should proceed. In my opinion the task of the phenomenology of religion is threefold, in the sense that this science discovers three dimensions in the religious phenomena, which are correlated though they should be clearly distinguished. The phenomenology of religion has to make inquiries into: 1) the theoria of the phenomena, 2) the logos of the phenomena, 3) the entelecheia of the phenomena. The theoria of the phenomena discloses the essence and the significance of the facts, f.i. the religious meaning of sacrifice, of magic, of anthropology. The logos of the phenomena penetrates into the structure of different forms of religious life. Religion is never an arbitrary conglomerate of conceptions and rites, but always possesses a certain structure with an inner logic. The entelecheia of the phenomena reveals itself in the dynamics, the development which is visible in the religious life of mankind. On this last point Pettazzoni somewhat misunderstood Van der Leeuw, because he took offence at some strong words of the latter. Van der Leeuw certainly had an eye for development in the world of religion. This is proved by the paragraph in his "Phänomenologie" in which he deals with "Dynamik der Religionen". Under this heading he puts: Synkretismus, Mission, Erweckungen, Reformationen.

This surely is a modest part of the items involved in the idea of development. However, the paragraph which I quoted, proves that the antithesis between Pettazzoni and Van der Leeuw is slighter than is generally accepted.

From the preceding argument the contribution of the phenomenology of religion to the study of the history of religions can easily be deduced. Summarized in five points it could be formulated as follows:

1) the phenomenology of religion can render a service to the history of religion by impelling the latter science to consider the principles of its study. It is a wellknown fact that historians of religions do not bother their heads much about the presuppositions of their work. No wonder, for they are empirics who only pay attention to philological, historical or archaeological evidence. However they would play the ostrich if they would deny that nobody can study history and history of religions without starting from a hidden view on the course of events which is being scrutinized. Every historian operates with his own presupposition of which he mostly is not conscious. To this he is fully entitled. The question is only whether he has chosen the right principles, in the sense that they enable him to approach the historical facts from the right angle. Some studies give the impression that the author either is the victim of preconceived ideas or possesses a feeble notion of the methodological problems involved in the study of history. The phenomenology of religion can give assistance in this respect, because it has evolved a distinct theory about the method how to deal with religious phenomena.

2) the phenomenology of religion sharpens the eye for the specific nature of religion and for its function in cultural and social life. The historian of religions naturally studies religion in its context, i.e. interwoven as it is with all kinds of non-religious facts. Thereby he is in danger of losing sight of the true nature of religion. The phenomenology of religion must continually remind him of the ultimate aim of his studies, by stressing, that though religion nowhere occurs in "Reinkultur" history of religions becomes successful only when it manages to clarify what Pettazzoni called "the autonomous value of religion". Moreover, to my mind, religio-historical studies first get their full flavour when they show how religious conceptions and rites function in a texture of all kinds of non-religious ideas and forces.

3) the phenomenology of religion elucidates the purpose of the history of religions also in another sense. In my opinion several studies of the history of religions stick so to say in very clever philo-

logical researches or in well written historical treatises. Nobody can deny that philology and historical study are indispensable aids for the history of religions. One can even take a further step: without sufficient philological and historical knowledge no historian of religions will reach surprising results. However there is another side of the picture: philological and historical studies, brilliant as they may be, lead only halfways. The student of the history of religions should be more ambitious: he should never rest before he has clarified the religious significance of certain phenomena, how sphinxlike they may look. The phenomenology of religion incites him not to stop till he has reached the true end of his study: the clarification of the meaning of religious phenomena, though he sometimes to his great regret must pronounce a "non liquet".

4) the phenomenology of religion can assist the student of the history of religions by giving him insight into the essence and the structure of the religious phenomena. The true historian of religions is in scholarly respect a conscientious man. He goes ahead pace by pace to his conclusions. Often he detects so many uncertainties and contradictions in his material that he does not dare to make a pronouncement on the dominating idea of a certain complex of phenomena. A striking instance of this attitude of excessive prudence is to be found in the learned book of the Assyriologist Oppenheim, entitled "Ancient Mesopotamia, Portrait of a Dead Civilization". In the fourth chapter he enumerates the reasons "why a "Mesopotamian Religion" should not be written". His arguments are the following: the available evidence is too scanty and modern man is not able to understand the old Mesopotamian people across the barriers of conceptual conditioning. This means, in my opinion, the death blow to the history of religions. It testifies at the same time to a lack of scholarly courage and of power of imagination. Without these last qualities no scholar will succeed in his work. The true phenomenologist possesses both qualities. Let us see how this can work out in practice. It means e.g. that the historian of religions starts from the presupposition that the divinities of antiquity or of the East were originally and essentially figures of a homogeneous nature, whatever arbitrary traits might have been added later on to them. He can take this starting-point, because it is evident that religious people have never worshipped gods who were a patchwork quilt of heterogeneous and disconnected features. Moreover the conception in question has heuristic value, because it works as a divining rod which traces the historical truth. On the other hand it is true that the

sometimes bold statements of the phenomenologist must time and again be tested and corrected by the factual knowledge of the historian of religions. So there can raise a fruitful cooperation between the two disciplines, in the line of what Pettazzoni had in mind.

5) the phenomenology of religion can induce the historian of religions to ponder on the definition of religion which he uses. This is an important question, because every student of the history of religions tacitly handles a certain notion of religion during his researches. He simply can not avoid making use of such a notion. For, he would be unable to sift the religious facts from non-religious material, if he did not possess a criterium for his choice. This being the case, it is of paramount importance that he looks consciously into the matter and chooses the right definition. It is a wellknown fact that the formulation of a definition of religion is a crucial question. No phenomenologist will pretend that his conception is faultless. But he has the advantage of having reflected on the issue and therefore he can give guidance to the historian of religions, enabling the latter to revise his eventually too personal or imperfect definition of religion.

DISCUSSION

GNOLI. — Prof. Bleeker said that the eidetic vision is the research for the 'eidos', namely the essence and structure of the religious facts. What is the distinction between essence and structure of the religious facts, according to the phenomenology of religions?

BLEEKER. — It is not very easy to answer this question, because the two points are related, in my opinion. When you seek for the essence, then you seek for the true nature of a certain religious phenomenon (prayer, sacrifice...). You can also seek for the inner structure of these phenomena. As I tried to explain, religions always have an inner logic, that dominates the structure. E.g. if you have a certain notion of God, then from that notion you can deduce the anthropology, the way of salvation, and the cult of a certain religion. That is what I call structure and therein I detect the inner logic of religions.

BOLGIANI. — However much I personally may feel more sympathetic to forms of research such as those on which Alessandro Bausani, as well as our colleagues Michelini-Tocci, Pensa and Gnoli will be reporting, and by this I mean specific studies in the history of religions

pursued within precise historico-religious limits, nevertheless I consider that the papers we heard yesterday from Professor Widengren and from Bianchi, together with this morning's from Professor Bleeker, have all brought to our attention the methodological problem which is now of central importance, as much in this present debate as in discussion of the history of religions in general. It is a question of the relationship between "history and phenomenology", the formulation of which in the work of Raffaele Pettazzoni we were reminded of yesterday (and Luigi Salvatorelli appropriately recalled the precise remarks made by Pettazzoni in some of his notes published after his death), and which we have since seen worked out in Bianchi's paper and in Bleeker's from two different points of view. This problem of the relationship of history and phenomenology is now decisive both for the History and for the Science of Religions. Leaving aside for the moment the question (or questions) concerning the distinction between these two disciplines, I think it can be said that the above-mentioned problem is in itself more complex and binding than the in some ways similar one which has faced historians for some time, that of the relationship between historiography and historical methodology. I do not believe that we can say *tout court* that phenomenology is to the history of religions as historiographical methodology is to history. The problem is a good deal deeper and more complicated. In fact we need only examine some current works on the history of religions, even on the history (or so-called history) of specific religions or trends, to observe that the essence of these same works consists mainly, if not exclusively, in a phenomenologico-methodological discussion of the problem rather than in any specific treatment of the argument proposed. This phenomenologico-methodological treatment, even in the case of some who declare themselves adversaries or critics of phenomenology, is not only preponderant but virtually able to stand on its own, thereby neglecting the concrete problem under study (to the extent that some non-specialist in the subject, after reading some of these works, would know nothing more of the problem than he did before he began). I would like to recall here a number of aspects of this contrast (since it is indeed a contrast) between phenomenologists and historians. And first of all I wonder whether phenomenology, as appears from Professor Bleeker's paper, is not nowadays putting itself over, or at least trying to do so, as the instrument for analysing religious facts independently from and prior to the placing of the facts themselves in the specific context of history. It is true that the material, or we

might say methodology, which lends itself to this analysis is not a schematism worked out *a priori* and in abstract, but rather claims to be derived from a series of concrete observations and similarities. However, if we are not to remain on ground given over to the vaguest empiricism or to the sensitivity of the individual scholar, how can we conceive of being able to handle a concept as complex as a "phenomenon" (especially nowadays!), by limiting ourselves to the statement that the phenomenologist is a sort of layman faced with the epistemological problems of phenomenology? Still, in the view of historians, too abstract and far too conditioned by *a priori* arguments, the religious phenomenologist risks being regarded by authentic phenomenologists as primitive. And so at what point will the phenomenologist be able to pull up and hand over to the philosopher? Or, to put it another way, what is a "religious phenomenon" for these "lay phenomenologists"? The fact is this, that very often religious phenomenology is an empirical system of classification of data, and a criterion of more or less vaguely typological approximation for these data. I would not accept a conception of phenomenology as an instrument whose significance and use were simply classificatory. If, on the other hand, I have to make use of it to bring out in a positive historical reconstruction the actual *significance* of the religious facts under consideration (especially where I "integrate" comparatively a given religious element), I do not stop short at the level of classification of data, but I assume that I have a certain idea, beyond the given fact, of an essential reality, whether permanent or changing. A phenomenology which does not aim to consider a problem of "essences" is not phenomenology, at least in the specific sense of modern phenomenology from Husserl onwards. And it is true that if we go on from phenomenology to the field of history, and particularly the history of religions, we find things no better. It could in fact be maintained that the history of religions went into a period of crisis, as a comparative methodology, long before history did the same. Indeed, we might wonder—at the risk of stretching the limits of the problem slightly—whether we have ever had an effective history of religions in the full sense that that term implies. And there is cause for doubt if we consider that in a positivist and evolutionistic age, that which was called "history of religions" was in reality preconstituted on the basis of a presupposition of an evolutionistic and, in a certain sense, mechanical nature: hence what could there be more diametrically opposed to history, in the normal sense of the word. Even in the "Kulturkreislehre", which from the point of view of application

can be considered the broadest attempt at a history of religions acting as a history of cultures, the extrapolation of history has been a constant and even systematic procedure. The effective problem in fact put forward by this school has not been so much that of the history of cultures, as the explanation of history by means of a certain preconstituted framework of the succession and interaction of the various cultures. If as is said and claimed, religious phenomenology has brought about the crisis in the "history of religions", it has in reality been able to do so because it has acted upon a discipline which went under the name *historical*, but which was only historical within certain very precise and indeed relatively restricted limits. If it has done so at all, it has been with a certain good grace (when compared with the decidedly more drastic method used in the case of structuralism), employing, or at least intending to employ philological or historical material generally supplied not by comparative historians themselves, but in fact by philologists, historians, or perhaps men of letters. Phenomenology in its turn, taking in material of this kind, was obliged to accept it in the condition in which the followers of the specialist disciplines provided it. But why then did the followers of these individual disciplines—historians, philologists, and indeed men of letters—experience as they often do now so much difficulty in recognizing themselves in that very material elaborated by them, when that material is integrated into the phenomenological (or perhaps historico-phenomenological) syntheses in which phenomenologists (or historico-phenomenologists) of religions place it. Could it simply be a variety of viewpoints from which to consider the facts themselves, or could it be a conviction that the substance, the precise, particular and unrepeatable significance of the individual fact and datum has been emptied of its primary historical value and become purely symbolical, or only significant within a wholly different context quite unthought of before? Let us remember, as an example in passing, the controversy between Duchesne-Guillemin and Molé over the reconstruction of the Mazdean sacrifice (and in so doing we are also bringing together two historians of religions of very different mould, however similar they were in education and ability). And perhaps I may be permitted to give a personal example which I have had occasion to discuss with my students: talking of the place of worship and the "holy precinct", there is the well known phenomenon of the "change of religion" of certain holy places—sanctuaries, temples, springs and so on—which have remained sacred, with a constant unbroken throng of worshippers coming although the place had, for

instance, successively been Egyptian, then Hellenist, Christian, and finally Muslim. Phenomenologists and historians give and will continue to give very varied interpretations of the phenomenon. The phenomenologist will explain the matter in terms of "spatial sacrality" as if it were a quality which takes control of and determines the successive historical situations: whereas the historian will tend to explain the matter case by case, situation by situation, referring to a variety of causes and connexions (like the influence of traditions, political and social causes, reasons of prestige or of competition, and so on), and perhaps adducing an impressive array of concrete documentary evidence to support his thesis. The phenomenologist will reply that these are just circumstances which explain *how* the phenomenon came about, and not *why* it came about, and that the thronging of worshippers to the same holy place irrespective of the particular religious form taken by the cult belonging there is in fact proof precisely that the phenomenon is anterior to its particular manifestations: and so the debate would go on... In my humble opinion this position of contrast (in spite of the goodwill of those who believe that a renewed appeal to absolute —or perhaps neoabsolute—historicism, under whatever name it may go, could help us out of the difficulty) will not easily be resolved. Besides, we cannot conceal from ourselves, as I have pointed out before, the fact that over and above the specific problem of the relationship between phenomenology and the (comparative) history of religions, it is history and historical method as such which are today in a real crisis. However grave and disturbing this crisis may be, I am of the belief that we must be particularly aware of it from this point of view: above all that only with difficulty can we, today at least, transfer responsibility on to presuppositions and influences which we might call theologico-metaphysical. History, as a means of understanding reality, is in crisis today not so much because its value is denied but rather suspect and challenged in its capacity to set up a valid intersubjective relationship in the one area still declared valid for it in any confrontation, I mean the *synchronic* area. In substance, everything has today been brought into crisis which depends on a *diachronic* system, in other words on the category of *time*, which is said basically to have become a variable of no significance. With a certain pitiless logic of their own, all the "synchronic" positions of approach to reality maintain the uselessness of whatever does not tend towards this encounter with "concrete reality", and consequently with the alienating quality of all relations with the dimensions and directions of the past.

Perhaps it will seem to some that the colours with which I am mapping out briefly the present state of the "crisis of history" are quite catastrophic and apocalyptic: all the same I believe I am not exaggerating, for all that I have simplified and schematized it to some extent. Now, to return to our specific field of interest—that is, the history of religions—I believe that between the instances of a form of comparativism in which the sole function of history is to provide an anthology of examples, and those of a form of phenomenology unable to compete on firm ground with the particular and varying discoveries of specifically historical analysis, there still remains the solid and serious middle way represented in substance by the course which the fifth section of the "École Pratique des Hautes Études" has on the whole (indeed from its foundation until this day) been pursuing. It is true what some have observed that there, in all the variety of specialist teaching applying to single historico-religious areas or cultures, there is no single chair of the history of religions in the comparative sense (and those which are in some degree comparative are only so in the context of intercultural traditions which can be historically or philologically documented). It is also true that more than eighty years after the founding of the section of "Sciences Religieuses", we hear again authoritatively repeated from the mouth of its President, M. Paul Vignaux, that the overriding concern common to all tutors in the section is "une mise en garde envers toute synthèse hâtive", combined with "une défiance systématique à l'endroit de l'esprit de synthèse". We must also recognize that this patient, resolute, systematic exploration of the religious history of various areas and cultures not only actually prepares the material helpful towards an understanding of the single phenomena under study, but also provides material for a really serious comparison, that is, in cases where there exists an historical comparability between individual phenomena, and not in cases where comparison means departing from history. Personally I would like quietly and discreetly to remind both phenomenologists and comparative historians (who speak nonchalantly and with irritation of the excessive "philologism" of this attitude), that, after all, even concrete investigations of this sort continually formulate for us problems of method and deliberation about the nature and structure of religious facts, even if these problems may perhaps be less simple and less obvious than those which fill the sometimes slightly useless and superfluous pages of a number of so-called historians of religions. One good example of this serious method which comes to grips with reality and

deeply engages its problematical research in reality, is represented in my opinion by the paper read to us by Alessandro Bausani.

BLEEKER. — I am very thankful for your penetrating remarks. You have touched the vulnerable points of these sciences. For me it was necessary in a short paper to simplify a bit the problems. As to your first point, I for myself I am hesitating to go too deep into the philosophical questions about the essence of religion, of religious facts. I honestly think I must leave it to other scholars; I can only work as historian. In my mind phenomenology of religion is not a philosophical discipline, but a systematization of historical facts with the intent to understand their religious meaning. As to your second point, I also understand that there are many problems involved in the concept of history; but again here I say that we should have the courage to start with the work, even if it is incomplete, to the best of our ability; we cannot wait till all these problems are solved. I am to a certain extent an empiric. And I understand your fear for too great conceptions; I participate in that. But I think we have to go on, and make the best of it as historians.

DHAVAMONY. — I would like to question the distinction between history and phenomenology, history of religions and phenomenology of religions. The relationship between the two, methodologically, would be that the history of religions, or historical inquiry, namely, dealing with the origin and development of the religious phenomenon, would give us the historical meaning of the phenomenon, and then phenomenology of religions would give us the phenomenological structure, the essence, of the religious phenomena. The problem is the historical meaning as distinct from the phenomenological or the structural meaning; and then how are they related; this seems to touch the methodology itself. The historical method also implies a certain phenomenology, a certain structural meaning, a certain signification, and *vice versa.* So I am not too happy with the distinction of the two. I would say: historical and phenomenological understanding, history understood in the sense of taking into its context the meaning... My second point regards the essence of the religious fact. The essence in question, of course, is not the philosophical essence or the Platonic essence; but then here how to determine the essence of a religious fact, like sacrifice? Here comes in the full question of differentiation in analogous phenomena. Phenomena of sacrifices in India, phenomena of sacrifices in primitive peoples, structurally, with regard to the

meaning itself, are different. So one cannot simply take the common element and say: "here is the meaning of sacrifice", or "of the cosmic tree" and so on. One might be missing the whole important meaning, just because the cosmic tree as man uses it in one place is precisely different from another analogous fact. How to actually correlate these two?

BLEEKER. — As to the first point you will remember that in my paper I said that the phenomenology of religion has a double meaning. It means a handbook and it means a method, and this method should be applied, must be applied, also to history of religion. In my opinion you can only study history of religion fruitfully if you apply this method of the phenomenology of religions, that means that you try to find the religious value, the structure, the essence of the phenomena. On the other hand, phenomenology as a discipline gives a description of the different types; I may refer to the book of Prof. Widengren, Phänomenologie der Religion, where he e.g. gives the different types of the idea of the deity, High God, pantheism, and so on. That is included in phenomenology as a discipline. As to your second question, you are quite right that if you seek for the essence of, e.g., sacrifice, then you meet many different conceptions. In my opinion it is included that you try to clarify the different types; seeking for the essence of sacrifice is making researches into the different types of sacrifice, and then ultimately you may try to find a combining definition of what sacrifice is. That is very difficult, in my opinion, but you should try to do it.

BIANCHI. — Does Prof. Bleeker think it possible to somehow unify historical and phenomenological research by that concept of 'historical typology' I tried to elaborate in my paper, i.e., the possibility of analogous, comparable, parallel historical formations in different cultures? Could one imagine of a comparison which could be at the same time and in the same context historical and phenomenological, constructing its concepts not only by means of phenomenological generalization but also by means of concrete individualization of historical processes, i.e. of religious "worlds", engaged, as they are, in phenomena of diffusion, convergence, innovation, divergence, parallel development, and so on, and thus resulting to the concept of a (more or less) "analogical" (i.e. not "univocal" nor "aequivocal") meaning of words as "religion", "prayer", "sacrifice" etc.? This would be useful also in order to escape the *impasse* caused by the necessity of having a previous idea (if not a

precise definition) of the object of the research and the impossibility of getting such an idea or definition before having carefully studied that very object.

BLEEKER. — This last question is not easy to answer to; it raises many problems and we have little time to talk it over very quietly. But I can give a provisional answer. In my opinion there is and there will remain a difference of procedure between history of religion and phenomenology of religion. As to typology of religion, it is more or less included, in my opinion, in the phenomenology of religion. There are types of phenomenology of religion that you could classify as typology.

BIANCHI. — What about a 'historical typology of religions'?

BLEEKER. — Yes, historical typology. I am not so in favour of using that notion. I don't exactly understand what is the import of that word. History is evolution, it is a process. Can you really in this process distinguish different types?

BIANCHI. — An analogy between historical processes, between historical developments; "parallele" evolutions within separate cultures...

BLEEKER. — Yes, but that is another matter. You mean a comparison between different processes, of typological structure. That could be done, but then the question arises: where are you to locate this study? There is, as we know, a general history of religion, next to the particular history of religions; perhaps this would be the best place to locate this kind of research.

WIDENGREN. — I would like to present a few concluding remarks. The problems are actually the same in all historical disciplines. Let's take e.g. a subject which is quite near to my heart, namely, feudalism. Of course we could study feudalism from a historical point of view, in the various cultural areas; we could also present a systematic treatment of feudalism. It was spoken by Prof. Bolgiani about a crisis of history. Well, this crisis of history has not prevented historians from publishing, in our days too, lots of excellent work on historical matters. So, the science of history is still going on in spite of the pretended crisis, and I think the same will prove also true of the history of religions. He further pointed to the fact that at the Sections des sciences religieuses of the École pratique there are twenty four chairs in the discipline of history of religions, that there is not a single one occupied with the phenomenology of religion. But this lack has been

deeply deplored by specialists in the various fields. I may refer e.g. to Prof. Georges Dumézil (in his preface to Eliade's Traité d'histoire des religions), and this regret is shared, I know, by many specialists. I have had many discussions with my colleagues on this topic and I have said that it is really sometimes rather depressive to be working in the field of the phenomenology of religion when you are incarnating the nature of an historian; but those colleagues have kindly urged me to go on because they are of the opinion that we need something which, so to say, integrates all the various disciplines into the whole structure of the history of religions.

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ISLAM IN THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

1. With this paper I do not so much intend to make a "scientific communication"; I rather wish it to be a methodological reflexion in answer to the question: how and how much do I, as an islamist, give my contribution to "history of religions" in studying Islam? In other words, in how much does the study of socalled "superior" religions fit into History of Religions as a unitary discipline? I shall not base the development of this paper on mere theoretical considerations; but rather on some concrete examples of research method within the Islamic field. It is my opinion, though, that similar concrete examples might be found in a parallel way, in other fields of research (such as History of Christianity, Buddhism etc.). As we are here assembled to commemorate our late regretted and common master Raffaele Pettazzoni, this talk of mine could perhaps be considered as a sort of continuation of the seminaries that he used to keep, a few years before he died. These seminaries usually dealt with specific arguments (for instance, "God's omniscience", or "the meaning of culture" etc.) and Pettazzoni used to invite to them several specialists of various cultural areas that would be interested in History of Religions.

2. First we must see *if* we may (and if we may, in how far) talk about "superior religions" the way I did before. Even if we—obviously enough—do not imply by the word "superior" any intrinsic evaluation, it still remains ambiguous and vague. The word "superior" could make sense in a purely exterior typology, where distinction could be made between religions whose documents are not written hence they may be studied using ethnological methods, and religions which possess a rich written documentation and are thus liable to a philological study. If this were to be true, those who refuse any unitary value to the History of Religions would have a right to say that such a discipline dissolves into single sections of various religious philologies and into ethnology.

A distinction between "natural" religions and "founded" religions might sound different and perhaps more historical. But this too is

acceptable only by half; the role of personalities, that are perhaps nowadays hidden behind legend, in the creation of religions that might seem "natural" at first sight, should be checked thoroughly and studied well. We would be faced then with a major or minor importance of their "founders": Buddha would be different from Kṛṣṇa (presumed founder of Hinduism according to certain Indian tendencies) only because study could be based on historical documents, for the former, and perhaps also because his personal foundation-work would have been more intense or effective. The same could be said about other cultural areas.

I believe that it would be a better typology to distinguish between two fundamental types of religion (each with its various subdivisions, of course): the archaic religions and the monotheistic ones. This is also Pettazzoni's opinion, expressed in his studies about monotheism, which are too well known here for me to resume them [1]). I only want to stress the point that, according to the regretted Master, a clear typological distinction should be made between the concept of a "Great God" or Supreme Being, present in various archaic religions, and that of a One and Only God, to be found in monotheism. The former comes from a mythical perception of the sky, the latter is the outcome of the polemic, revolutionary, anti-polytheistic labour of a prophetic-historical founder, who might even use any god of the archaic pantheon (in Islam, for instance, Allāh-Hubal) after having changed its functional value completely. In this specific sense, according to Pettazzoni, monotheism is a very rare phenomenon in History of Religions; during a certain period of his studies he even used to think that this phenomenon was unique (Israelitic monotheism, that would have influenced even Zoroastrianism) [2]).

M. Eliade makes a quite similar typological distinction, although from a different point of view, especially in his *Mythe de l'éternel Retour* where the distinction between *archaic* religions and *monotheistic* religions is based on their different conceptions about the religious meaning of "Time" [3]). In fact, the distinction between the two types does not only invest the idea of God, but the entire religious pheno-

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[1]) See his essay *Dio: Formazione e sviluppo del monoteismo*, Bologna, 1922; see further various articles in *Saggi di storia delle religioni e mitologia*, Roma, 1946, and *Onniscienza di Dio*, Torino, 1955.

[2]) Cfr. *La religione di Zarathustra*, Bologna, 1920, p. 79 ff. Obviously the idea is now obsolete, but it is interesting to show Pettazzoni's approach to the definition of monotheism.

[3]) M. Eliade, *Le Mythe de l'Éternel Retour*, Paris, 1949, p. 152 ff. and passim.

menology as well. Even if the external features of single phenomena in archaic and monotheistic religions might at times seem similar, their *way* of functioning is really different. One very plain example: *Incarnation* has similar phenomenological aspects but "works" in a very distinct way there where we have an incarnation of a Unique God into a man-god, from there where it is meant that one or more men incarnate a "neutral" divine principle (*to theion*) or a single aspect of divineness. Although phenomenologically they might seem similar, there is a deep functional difference between Christ and one of Viṣṇu's *avatārs*. Thus I believe that in this sense a wisely built typology *might help to reinforce the historical method*. And to this purpose, the concept of "functioning" in a given typological context is of main importance. And here I repeat a definition of G. Widengren, whom we could not suspect of absolute historicism. This author used very aptly the following words in a note on his study on Muḥammad [4]) (and better credit should be given to these words, if we consider that not always does the Author himself keep his own suggestion in mind): "... Any conception whatsoever must not be isolated, but treated in its natural environment of related ideas, with which it is intimately bound up. Only in this manner are we able to trace the real origin of a religious idea. The atomistic method here leads us quite astray".

In the ambit of monotheistic religions we may—the way I have tried to do it in two articles of mine that I am not to repeat here [5])—make a further typological distinction between primary monotheisms (Hebraism, Islam) and secondary (Christianity, new religions that had their origin in Islam, especially Bahā'ism) whose characteristics have rather different structures and functions.

Here too I will avail myself of the example of "Incarnation" which some phenomenologists keep considering in too superficial a manner. Talking about a phenomenon that is frequent in various so-called "extreme" sects of Islam, even authoritative islamists (which in this case prove to be bad historians of religion as well as bad philologists), uphold that to some extreme Shīᶜites ᶜAlī is an *incarnation* of God, or prophet X or Y are *incarnations of God*. But the term used for

4) G. Widengren, *Muḥammad the Apostle of God, and His Ascension*, Uppsala/Wiesbaden, 1955, p. 56-57, n. 4.

5) A. Bausani, "Note per una tipologia del monoteismo", in SMSR, XXVIII, 1957, pp. 67-88. A. Bausani, "Can Monotheism be taught? (Further considerations on the typology of Monotheism)", in *Numen* X, 3, 1963, pp. 167-201. Naturally another subdivision, by types, may be made for "archaic" religions, but this is of no interest here.

"incarnation" in Islamic texts, where they polemically want to define the typical incarnation of secondary monotheisms, and especially the one accepted in Christianism, is *ḥulūl*, which is always kept very markedly distinct from any other form of manifestation of the divinity in man, and especially from the typologically and functionally very different form of *maẓhar*, which means "manifestation". Nowhere, absolutely nowhere in the most extremistic sects of Islam, can we find *ḥulūl*. Even when a person is said to *be* God, this *be* is always explained, not as an incarnation, but rather as a *maẓhar* i.e. a manifestation, with terms that have been borrowed from the Near-Eastern and Gnostic metaphysics of light.

The unique God and his inaccessible essence remain up high; the man-god is nothing but a very pure mirror in which *God reflects himself*. Whoever passes in front of a mirror wherein the sun is reflected (these are words which I heard personally from authoritative representatives of some "extreme Islamic sects") may justly say: "this is the sun", even though the sun remains in its inaccessible position in the sky, and the mirror is still nothing but a mirror in itself. So the Christian who says: "Christ *is* God", and the Khurramdīnī who says: "ᶜAlī *is* God", both give to the word *is* a very different meaning, which is something the historians of religions should keep in mind. At page 45 of his already mentioned book Widengren says instead: ... "Of a still higher degree is of course the Imām according to the dogma that he is not only a god but God, Allāh who is *incarnate* in the successive chain of the Imāms who are the Apostles...". But we can see from the quotation of al-Dailamī, mentioned by the very Author himself to support his theory, that *incarnate* is nothing but an extrapolation. "And the people say of Ali: He was God who *appeared* in Adam and the Apostles and Imāms...". In our colleague's sentence there is the word 'dogma' which should also be further discussed; it throws a better light on the typology of monotheism. In some way acceptable, at times even fundamental where secondary monotheism are concerned, this term surely may not be accepted for primary monotheisms. In the case of Islam and the Islamic-Christian polemics, *dogma* is usually translated with *ẓann* (opinion) or even with the word *xurāfāt* (superstitions, imaginary ideas, fantasies). Thus there could not be any typological justification for using "dogma" in Islam.

Thus we have seen that a first important range of historical-religious studies on Islam is a general one about the typology of Islam and of its sects. To achieve this, philology might be of precious help (and

examples of this have been given above) to help us to correct errors to which pure phenomenology could lead; however, philology is nothing but a, quite indispensable, help and this is why Islam could not be studied by a specialist in Arabic or Persian philology only; it needs a historian of religions specialised in Islamic philology.

3. The monotheistic religions, whereof Islam is perhaps the most radical "incarnation" possible, present other very interesting and typically historical-religious problems. One of them, and a fundamental one, is the problem of the very origin of monotheism, that has not been satisfactorily solved yet, in my opinion. A historical-religious study about the origins of Islam in its Arabic milieu seems very useful to me. A passage or transformation of the concept of a "God of the race", to that of a "Unique God"? Psychological projection of the Founder? Derivation from a "primitive" pseudo-monotheism of the Great Sky-God? etc.

Personally I take the first solution for more valid and in an article in "Numen" I have tried to construct its successive psychological stages perhaps in a somewhat imaginative way: more or less in accordance with the psychology of a primary monotheistic type, with its typically voluntaristic and anti-ontologic theology. But the archaic religion-type, which is much more "natural" than monotheism (and Pettazzoni's opinion about the rarity, the uniqueness of the "monotheistic" phenomenon confirms it) still remains and influences monotheism. No concrete, historical example gives evidence of an absolute theoretical type of monotheism.

And here we get to the most fascinating problems that we may call —to use a term which in my opinion is erroneous, but is also very popular, and mentioned in the title of a famous book on Islam [6])— "pagan survivals" in monotheism, here more specifically in Islam.

In the title of the mentioned book both terms, '*pagan*', generic and worn out, and "survivals" are wrongly used. The title should be changed, as I have proved in an article of mine [7]) into a more exact one, i.e. "Integration of archaic elements in the Islamic religion" (or more generically, in monotheistic religions).

6) E. Westermarck, *Pagan Survivals in Mohammedan Civilization*, London 1933.

7) A. Bausani, "Sopravvivenze pagane nell'Islam o integrazione islamica?" in *SMSR*, 37 2, 1966, pp. 189-209. It could be said that the very fact that Westermarck talks about survivals in the "Mohammedan civilization" and not (in the title) in the "Islamic religion" diminishes the weigh of my assertion, but in fact "Islam" and "Mohammedan civilization" seem identical to him (and to others).

Several studies have been written on this behalf, as far as Christianity and Hebraism are concerned, as well as for Islam. Starting with the above-mentioned typology, the problem of integrations or survivals develops somewhat differently in the two different subtypes. In secondary monotheisms (the ones that take their origin from another monotheism) the problem is perhaps more complicated. That phenomenon which I called "fermentation of the divine" in one of my papers, and which causes a prolification of angels and angel-like bodies within the frame of a too monolithic primary monotheism, creates the impression of substratum influences; but more often these pretended substratum influences are purely theological creations. To stay within the limits of new religions born from Islam, and to avoid entering the too burning ambit of Christianity, let us consider those intellectualistic and theologizing items of *pleromas*, *intellectual agents*, *logoi*, *forces*; at times they were believed to be influenced by archaic substratum remainders of *genii* and divine polytheistic divinities, whereas they are nothing but speculations 'coming from above', that create a sort of theological mythology that derives from an Iranian tendency to theologize, as I have tried to explain elsewhere [8]). These phenomena should be kept distinct from the real substratum influences that are integrated in the monotheistic religion. In other words, although these items might go under a same paragraph in a phenomenological treatise, the "Thrones and Dominations" and the "Guardian Angel" should be kept typologically separate and should be studied historically in a different way.

But even in the less complex primary monotheisms (such as Islam) integration of archaic elements should be studied with great care. In a study of mine, about the "Sacred Madman" in Islam [9]), I stressed the point that, although the Islam as a type of religion might seem less fruitful as far as comparative historical-religious studies are concerned, it offers a very interesting "laboratory" for the study of the historicization of myths. For instance, the Sacred Madman or Trickster, who had a specific mythical or semi-mythical aspect in archaic cultures, has here become a historical personality: adventures that are to be found in very ancient mythical cycles are here ascribed by "eye-witnesses" and annalists to this or that personality that has really lived. These, I added in my article, are Islam's real "myths" (integrations of archaic elements in Islamic monotheism) while other myths are typical of

8) A. Bausani, *Persia Religiosa*, Milano, 1958, p. 73 ff. and passim.

9) A. Bausani, "Note sul 'Pazzo Sacro' nell'Islam", in *SMSR*, XXIX, 58, pp. 93-107.

nascent secondary monotheisms more or less kept in embryonal stage (imamite angelism of *ghuluww*) and are rather an intellectual reformulation of theological concepts. In the mentioned article I tried to prove how the two types of "sacred madmen" of the Islamic culture were an integration in it of a reflection of the two types of the image of the "Devil" existing in archaic religiosity. That study was intended to give a start to an examination of other aspects of Islamic culture, which, until now, Islamists have studied whether philologically or ideologically, or juridically, but not specifically as far as history of religions is concerned. Unfortunately other activities and interests have made it impossible to me to go ahead with this study.

Numerous further examples prove the possibility of historical-religious approach to the various phenomena of the islamic culture. Here are a few of them.

4. *Prayer*, for instance. Prayer has been studied under various aspects: juridically (due to Islam's particular structure, the *ṣalāt*, "canonical prayer", is included in the Muslim lawbooks), theologically, historically within the Islamic mystics, all but for its historical-religious aspect. Even the studies done on the religious history of Islamic prayer, for instance Mittwoch's [10]), remain a rather extrinsic history. The Author does ascribe the single "pieces" of the functioning mechanism to Christian, Hebraic and other influences, but he fails to locate their functioning within the frame of Islam's concrete typology. How does, for instance, *ṣalāt al-istisqā'*, "ad impetrandam pluviam", integrate with the Islamic religious type, it being an almost universal historical-religious phenomenon? It is obvious that, if the various pieces and aspects of Islamic prayer are "preislamic survivals", this must be true for all religions, because *nil sub sole novi*; but in this case, history, deprived of the help of an intelligent functional typology, remains nothing but pure destructive analysis. I would like to mention here the name of Michelangelo Guidi, whom I consider my master in this field: his way of locating the problems in his studies on Muḥammad and early Islam [11]) is particulary well grounded from the historical-religious viewpoint.

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[10]) E. Mittwoch, *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des islamischen Gebets und Kultus* in "Abhandl. d. Preuss. Ak. der Wiss.", 1913, n. 2, pp. 10 ff.

[11]) Here I wish to refer to his *Religione dell'Islam*, in the 5nd volume of Tacchi Venturi's "Storia delle Religioni" (Torino, U.T.E.T., 6th edition, 1971), and to the posthumous *Storia e cultura degli Arabi fino alla morte di Maometto*, Firenze, 1951.

Another example could be the Islamic concept of *Satan*. Again I refer to a paper of mine, on Satan, and the way he is understood by a modern Muslim poet [12]). Historical influences helped me to go back from Muḥammad Iqbāl to orthodox and mystical concepts in Islam; and further I tried to reconstruct how Islam could integrate an archaic Satan with its positive and negative values, in a monotheistic typology, and how such an archaic Satan had suffered a transformation of values. Historically and typologically I consider Zwi Werblowski's thesis, *Lucifer and Prometheus*, on Milton's Satan as most illuminating [13]). The very fact that my study on the Islamic Satan has been effected only by 1955, shows how little has been done to study Islam on a historical-religious level.

Another field that has been studied thoroughly, but only rarely from a historical-religious point of view, is *Muslim Mysticism*. Even in scientific texts, but more still in Encyclopaedias and popularizing treatises, we can find affirmations such as the one of our learned colleague J. Duchesne-Guillemin, who, in the Symposium at Spa on "Unity and Variety in Muslim Civilization", simply declared: "Sufi mysticism... is perhaps Christian and Gnostic in origin... but certainly not Muslim". And further he speaks of "the Dervish orders... the origin of which was perhaps Buddhist, Manichean or Shamanist, but certainly not Muslim" [14]). In various articles of mine I have reacted against this apparently historical position which means instead, —in my opinion—to vanify history.

One can study Muslim mysticism from a concretely historical point of view, only if one keeps the functional typology in mind. That is to say, the single "pieces" of Muslim mysticism may be taken from this or that source (the way it happens with any other phenomenon in any other recent religion) but they have their proper function inside a typically and typologically Islamic context. In ignoring this historical-typological method one will get lost in useless and endless discussions about pantheism or non pantheism in Muslim mystics (especially for some of them). When typology is ignored, terms are twisted into an artificial conceptual translation (f.i. *waḥdat-i vujūd* = *pantheism*); no distinction is made between theopanism and pantheism, the Islamic

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[12]) A. Bausani, "Satana nell'opera filosofico-poetica di Muḥammad Iqbāl (1873-1938)" in *RSO* XX, 1955, pp. 55-102.

[13]) Z. Werblowsky, *Lucifer and Prometheus. A study of Milton's Satan*, London, 1952.

[14]) *Unity and Variety in Muslim Civilization*, Chicago, 1955.

and monotheistic *Unity of God* gets confused with the archaic "*unity of the being*"; *nirvāṇa* is identified with *fanā*², and so on. Here again I would like to mention the name of a late regretted Italian orientalist, Martino Mario Moreno. Although he was not officially considered as a historian of religions, his work on the presumed similarities between Indian and Muslim mystics [15]) proved him to be it more than are many other islamists.

Methodical errors such as these mentioned for mysticism are frequent in another, somewhat analogous, field: "Sects", or Heterodox Muslim Communities. The problems involved with this specific argument are too many to be examined here. Presently H. Corbin's metaphysical-iranophile school seems to take up again, in an undoubtedly fascinating way, an already old tendency that had appeared to be out of date: to interpret Muslim heresy as an *Aryan* reaction (Persian, in particular) to a "semitic Islamism", and thus to level, in an antihistorical way, the most different phenomena under a metaphysical common denominator. In a recent book K. E. Müller [16]) tries to demonstrate (and this is easy if again one takes single isolated pieces away from their functioning in a whole) the total non-islamicity of certain extreme sects, of the *yazīdī* and *Nuṣairī* type. According to Müller, these would have put on only a superficial Islamic aspect, but would really be remainders of real preislamic religious communities, or even ethnic groups with "agricultural old-mediterranean" beliefs. At the same time quite a few islamists consider the Bahā'ī religion,—a secondary monotheistic religion that has its origin in Islam, the way Christianity has its origin in Hebraism,—as a "Muslim sect", thus completely showing to ignore any typology whatsoever [17]). Even as far as the very origin of Shīᶜism is concerned, only few seem to have followed the direction, brilliantly started by Sabatino Moscati in his 1955 article in *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* [18]). Here the author puts the problem historically and finally distinguishes clearly the double aspect of the first Shīᶜa, the political one and the more definite religious one.

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[15]) M. M. Moreno, "Mistica musulmana e mistica indiana", in *Annali Lateranensi*, X, 1946, pp. 103-219, a subject which he took up again in "Mistica musulmana e mistica indiana nel Maǧmaᶜu'l-Baḥrayn di Dārā Šikōh" in *RSO*, 1949, pp. 59-66.

[16]) His thesis shows already in his title (K. E. Müller, *Kulturhistorische Studien zur Genese Pseudo-islamischer Sektengebilde in Vorderasien*, Wiesbaden, 1967). The sects studied include Yazīdī, Ahl-i Ḥaqq, Nuṣairī, Druzes, with hints at other groups.

[17]) In H. Laoust's excellent work, *Les Schismes dans l'Islam*, Paris, 1965, pp. 363 to 370, devoted to the study of Bābism-Bahā'ism, though well informed, end by considering the new religion as a "Muslim sect".

[18]) S. Moscati, "Per una storia dell'antica šīᶜa", in *RSO* XXX, 1955, pp. 251 ff.

Penetration and integration in Islam (I am here stressing the term "*integration*" that should correct and further explain the term "*penetration*" of single fragments) of legends and ideological cycles, whether Near-Eastern, Iranic and Indian, in the ocean of Muslim folk-tales, is another very interesting working field for the historian of Islamic religion. The *taᶜzié*, for instance (Persian religious folk-dramas) have started to be explored only lately, and offer fascinating possibilities for research on monotheistic-islamic transformations (demythologization, pseudo-historical integration etc.) of cycles of mythological or semi-mythological motives, even extremely old. As a matter of fact, the numerous studies made on the *taᶜzié* used to be either mostly philological, or, whenever they showed historical-religious attempts [19]), they were conditioned by the fact that only a limited number of *taᶜzié* was on hand, and usually only *taᶜzie* directly connected with the Karbalā drama. Nowadays the wealthy material which the Ambassador E. Cerulli offered as a gift to the Vatican Library (more than 1000 booklets of such dramas! [20]) allows to study various aspects of one and the same motive and shows how the Karbalā drama was used as a pretext for treating the most different historical-religious materials [21]).

In studying *taᶜzies*, one should avoid a double methodological danger. First to fall into pure philology; second to bend to an "easy comparativism", exemplified by Ch. Virolleaud's study, who ignores the peculiar monotheistic typology of Islam, and of Shīᶜa Islam in particular.

5. To conclude with: Islam is still waiting for a thorough historical-religious study. This pessimistic affirmation does not want to deny the validity of some historical-religious studies about Islam already existing. What I mean is that such studies are still rather exceptional and even

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19) Ch. Virolleaud, for instance, in his *Le théatre persan ou le drame de Kerbela*, Paris, 1950. Virolleaud's method in this work of his is a rather superficial comparatism.

20) The catalogue of this material (precious because it is divided according to subjects): E. Rossi-A. Bombaci, *Elenco di drammi religiosi persiani* (*fondo mss. vaticani Cerulli*), Città del Vaticano, 1961.

21) I have started such a kind of work with a commented edition of a few *taᶜzié* containing biblical materials: A. Bausani, *Drammi popolari inediti persiani sulla leggenda di Salomone e della regina di Saba*, in "Atti del Conv. Internaz. di Studi Etiopici", Roma, 1960, pp. 167-209. A. Bausani, *San Giovanni Battista e Zaccaria in tre drammi popolari persiani inediti della collezione Cerulli*, in "Atti del Conv. Internaz. sul tema: l'Oriente Cristiano nella storia della Civiltà", Roma, 1964, pp. 153-237.

these studies have remainders of old-fashioned philological comparatism. In my opinion the most valuable study of the kind is my friend and colleague G. Widengren's, whose credit it is, among others, to have taken up the problem again of the Manichean influences on early Islam, in a more precise and richer way. If I may allow myself to find some defects in this work, I would locate them especially in the very fact that the author bases himself too much on "lexical elements", at times isolated from their context, using an "atomistic method" very much in contrast with the *aurea maxima* that Widengren himself mentions in his work and which I have quoted before. To give but two examples of this: the purely lexical parallelism between *ar-rūḥ al-amīn* and *ar-rasūl al-amīn* does not seem enough to me to justify the important historical-religious conclusions (over and above their being true) he is making. And further, the mere fact that Kaᶜb ben Zuhair's panegyric to the Prophet (wherein the author follows the literary conventions of the preislamic epoch) says as follows: "... the Apostle is a light by which we are enlightened" is but a very feeble pretext to a possible identification of the Prophet with the qur'anic "light of God".

In spite of this, G. Widengren's book is a very important milestone in the way to a historical-religious study of Islam [22]). A study which, and I repeat this as a conclusion, should be based on a h i s t o r i c a l f u n c t i o n a l t y p o l o g y. If we ignore one of the aspects indicated by one of these three words; that is, if we fall into a typology that ignores the function of the single elements in a whole, or if we make a history that ignores the typological structure, we shall continue producing islamological works, perhaps of high value, but which will not fit, *stricto sensu*, into the History of Religions. And this would justify the suspicion of our colleagues "historians of religion" towards the specialists of the single "superior religions", whom they, at times duly, accuse of wanting to let their quite interesting philological or historical studies go for historical-religious works, when they are not.

DISCUSSION

BORRMANS (Rome). — Professeur, j'ai été très intéressé par votre conférence. Dans la perspective de ce que disait le Pr Bianchi et de son souhait de voir établir une typologie, j'aimerais que l'on se pose,

22) Also in other works G. Widengren rightly empasizes the importance of Islam for a phenomenological approach to the History of Religions. See for instance G. Widengren, *Some Remarks on the Methods of the Phenomenology of Religion*, in "Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis", 17, pp. 250-260; see especially p. 260.

toujours dans le cadre de ces recherches de typologie, le problème des relations structurales entre une religion et une langue. Dans le cas de l'Islam et de la langue arabe, il y a, en effet, une relation presque intrinsèque, relation qui, dans le développement théologique même de la pensée musulmane, a produit parfois un rétrécissement de la réflexion, dans la voie dite orthodoxe, alors que peut-être, dans les autres voies, il n'en a pas été de même. Une autre typologie devrait d'ailleurs s'intéresser à ce classement en orthodoxie et hétérodoxie, entre membres d'une même religion. Pour en revenir à la relation étroite qu'il y a entre la langue arabe et la pensée religieuse musulmane, il convient de souligner combien le vocabulaire "religieux" (musulman en l'occurrence) de certaines nations africaines, du Maghreb par exemple où le berbère est demeuré la langue de certaines régions montagnardes, est typiquement arabe, au point que l'on recherche difficilement le vocabulaire religieux "de base" que possédait cette langue (le berbère) avant son islamisation. Il convient donc de prévoir un "type" spécial pour ces religions où langue déterminée et foi ont en quelque sorte partie liée.

Bausani. — Après avoir rappelé son intéret pour ces questions linguistiques, le Prof. Bausani se dit parfaitement d'accord sur le lien très fort qui existe entre la religion et la langue de l'Islam, ce qui est vrai aussi pour ces territoires islamiques qui sont encore plus marginaux que ceux qu'il avait mentionnés (p. ex. l'Indonésie). Il y a eu en Indonésie une renaissance des études arabes, tandis qu'autour des siècles XVIe et XVIIe la prédominance était plutôt du Persan. Depuis le XVIIIe siècle le pélerinage et les contacts avec le monde arabe ont été un élément unitaire important, comme on voit pour ce qui est de l'étude de l'arabe dans un monde si éloigné comme celui de la Malésie et de l'Indonésie. Mais on aurait à ajouter beaucoup pour ce qui est des rapports intrinsèques entre Islam et langue.

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PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF THE STUDIES ON PERSIAN RELIGION

The Persian religion is dominated by the figure of Zoroaster. Even today those who call themselves the heirs of this tradition—the Parsees—honor Zoroaster as the prophet, the founder of the true faith, the revealer of the orthodox doctrine in which a supreme and unique God, Ahura Mazdā,—creator (but not from nothing) of everything that exists for man's happiness—is put at the center of the universe. God's power manifests itself in two polarities, through a universal law of production and construction: the first one positive, Spənta Mainyu, and the other negative, Aŋra Mainyu; the former active and livening, the latter destructive and mortiferous [1]). As one can see Zoroaster here assumes the personality of a great founder of religion, who proclaims an ignored truth, hinged on the faith in a unique God and on an accentuated ethical conception of the human existence that has to keep to the rules of the true faith and that must fight against all the manifestations of Aŋra Mainyu's malefic power.

It did not take very long to pass from this conception to the nowadays scientifically asserted idea of a Zoroaster the enemy of ancient Indo-Iranian type polytheism, and ever so short was it to pass from that conception common to a good many of scholars, to the one that may be found in the medieval Mazdean literature. As a matter of fact, but for the miraculous aspects attributed to the prophet by the pious tradition, the critics have substantially accepted various facets of an orthodox vision that were tardily codified and were badly handed down to this era, loaded with contradictions and incertainty [2]). Thus, many scholars talk of Zoroaster as if he were an authentically historical figure that had lived in a period matching more or less with the Mazdean religious tradition period [3]). It is true that these conclusions were

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1) Duchesne-Guillemin, *RIA*, p. 5 ff. where he cites J. M. Unvala, in *Wörter und Sachen*, 1937, p. 161 ff.

2) It is enough to think that the Parsees, having lost the key to the Pahlavī scripture, badly interpreted the name of Ohrmazd himself.

3) See Duchesne-Guillemin, *RIA*, p. 135 ff.

derived from elements that did not belong to this tradition, but it is also true that the arguments in their favour are all to some extent very fragile and even insubstantial from a historical point of view [4]).

Zoroaster, a historical figure that lived between the seventh and sixth cent. B.C., is, in the more common interpretation of the scholars, the founder of a new, monotheistic and dualistic religion. In conscious opposition to a polytheistic tradition that finds its origins in an epoch—prehistorical, to these regions—anterior to the splitting of the Aryan people in their historical settlements, at both sides of the Indus. Due to the most popular opinion, Zoroaster lowered the *daēvas* to the level of demons, and concentrated in one *ahura*, Ahura Mazdā, the attributes of the supreme deity. To others what was typical of the Zoroastrian teaching was not its being monotheistic, but rather its being markedly dualistic, in the sense of a "protest against monotheism" [5]); in this case it was the monotheistic idea and not the polytheistic one that Zoroaster was fighting against to spread his message, founded on man's moral choice between Good and Evil. Going ahead in this style, it was even supposed that the Gāthic doctrine is the product of a syncretism; Zoroaster had merged and combined two religions, one monotheistic where the *aša*, Avestan equivalent of the Vedic *ṛtá*, is an emanation of the supreme god, the other dualistic, where the same principle would be primordial [6]).

No doubt, though, that the more spread thesis about the origin of Zoroastrianism is the one that evocates a polytheistic religious primitive frame, substantially related to the one of the Indian Vedas, inside and against which would have risen the big reformer and founder of that religion that has the Avesta for its sacred text. As the Iranian philology became better known, the various interpretations of the fundamental historical problems of the Persian religion became more numerous and at times contrasting; but notwithstanding the variety of the points of view, Zoroaster, but for a few exceptions (among them Darmesteter [7]) and Nyberg [8]) that remained famous) keeps his figure of a revolutionary prophet of monotheism. A prophet—as was said—not too unlike the traditional, nowadays less scientifically

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4) See below.
5) Henning, *Zoroaster*, p. 46.
6) Gershevitch, *JNES*, 23, 1964, p. 12.
7) Darmesteter, *Le Zend-Avesta*, I-III, Paris 1892-1893.
8) Nyberg, RAI.

founded, idea [9]) of the Prophets of Israel. After Spiegel's [10]) theory about contacts and reciprocal influence between the Hebrew and the Iranian world, come the theories of de Harlez [11]) and Pettazzoni [12]) on the influence of Hebrew prophetism on the monotheistic and ethical message of the Iranian Reformer. To Moulton also [13]) monotheism is the fundamental peculiarity of the Gāthic teaching: the dualism, that is typical of Persian religion, would be nothing but a vicious inheritance of the primitive superstitious mentality of the Median Magi. Bartholomae [14]), instead, believes that the dualistic concept, absent from the original formulation of the Zoroastrian doctrine, was introduced in it later by the very prophet himself, in the soon frustrated hope to overwhelm the resistence that he had met in Media, his home-country, against the idea of a too strictly monotheistic God. Starting from different bases, other scholars have tried to explain the heterogeneity of ancient Iran's religious physionomy and to show the complexity of the historical problems that it raises. Thus, Zurvanism is taken for a separate religion, distinct from Mazdeism. And after analysis of the Greek sources compared with the Iranian ones, it seems to Benveniste [15]) that within Mazdeism there are major differenciations which entitle to talk about one essentially Zoroastrian Mazdeism and another, that, according to this author, would be the one reflected in the Achaemenian inscriptions, and that did not get involved with the Zoroastrian reformation. Wesendonk [16]), Junker [17]) and Schaeder [18]) had already noticed the importance of the Zurvanite problem, taken up by Benveniste, when Nyberg [19]) put the problem in new terms that served as a basis for further researches [20]). The Iranian scholars of the Swedish

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9) See among the last ones H. H. Rowley, "Ritual and the Hebrew Prophets", in *Myth, Ritual and Kingship*, ed. by S. H. Hooke, Oxford 1958, pp. 236-260.

10) Fr. Spiegel, *Erânische Alterthumskunde*, 1-3 Leipzig 1871-1878.

11) Ch. de Harlez, *Avesta*, Paris 1881, see the introduction and especially pp. CCV-CCVI.

12) R. Pettazzoni, *La religione di Zarathustra nella storia religiosa dell'Iran*. Bologna 1920.

13) V. H. Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism*, London 1903.

14) Chr. Bartholomae, *Zarathustra's Leben und Lehre*, Heidelberg 1924.

15) Benveniste, PR.

16) O. G. von Wesendonk, *Das Wesen der Lehre Zarathuštrōs*, Leipzig 1929.

17) H. Junker, *Über iranische Quellen der hellenistischen Aion-Vorstellung* (*Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg* 1921-1922), Leipzig 1923.

18) H. H. Schaeder, *Urform und Fortbildungen des manichäischen Systems* (*Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg* 1924-1925), Leipzig 1927.

19) H. S. Nyberg, *JA*, 214, 1929, pp. 193-310; 219, 1931, pp. 1-134, 193-244.

20) See especially R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan. A Zoroastrian Dilemma*, Oxford 1955,

school, from Nyberg [21]) to Widengren [22]) and Wikander [23]) raised Zrvan, Miθra, Vayu, Anāhitā to the level of Hochgötter of ever as many religious systems, distinct from Mazdeism; together with the latter, these various religious systems would help to define the frame of ancient Iran's religious world in its complexity.

The outline of the studies on Persian religion, that has now become traditional, proves that after the original phase of a pure, monotheistic and highly ethical Zoroastrian Mazdeism, came a rather long period of contamination, syncretism and renaissance of the old paganism that had never really died, one of which represented by the "*Yasna* of the seven chapters" [24]), already imbued with polytheism. Now some people are astonished in noticing how the very disciples of the prophet, as soon as he was dead, betrayed his teaching, twisted the sense of it totally, reaccepted the cult of deities that he had so violently been condemning and reestablished the cult of the *haoma*. But it is not so much this betrayal that one should be astonished about: distortions, misunderstandings, deviations are very common to humanity's history of religions; what does rightly strike part of the scholars, from Zaehner [25]) to Molé [26]), is how this betrayal used to be perpetrated, in despising forms most absolutely. To substitute to the cult of a unique god an army of deities and genii implies a far too obvious contrast for it to be credible; and same goes for the *haoma* sacrifice: the very idea that this rite against which Zoroaster had fought so overtly, as is the most common opinion, had become the central rite of Zoroastrian liturgical practice after his death, is absurd. Such betrayals or degenerations are usually happening inside a same form: what changes most is the contents of it; usually the form is instead kept with much respect and care. Which means that what changes is the interpretation, the comprehension, the commonly accepted significance of a doctrine, of a myth, of a rite.

The outline that has a first period of an Indo-Iranian pagan type, followed by Zoroastrianism, followed itself by a pagan-like syncretism characterized by a re-introducing of elements condemned by the prophet

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21) Nyberg, RAI.

22) Widengren, *Hochgottglaube*; *Id.*, *Stand und Aufgaben*; *Id.*, RI.

23) S. Wikander, *Vayu*, I, Uppsala 1941; *Id.*, *Feuerpriester in Kleinasien und Iran*, Lund 1946.

24) About the value of such a part of the *Yasna*, see Gershevitch, *JNES*, 23, 1964, pp. 14-15, n. 11; Widengren, RI, p. 94 ff.

25) Zaehner, DTZ, p. 85 sgg.

26) Molé, CMC, p. 229 ff.

himself, fits perfectly with the socio-ethnological theory of the tripartite ideology of Dumézil [27]) and his followers. In this case Zoroaster would have sublimated the functional series of Indo-Iranian deities, substituting them with abstract notions—the Aməša Spəntas—considered as as many members or aspects of Ahura Mazdā; then, in a more recent period, the substituted deities had been put next to their substitutes, Miθra to Vohu Manah, Vayu to Spənta or to Aŋra [28]) Mainyu etc. The aim of this revolutionary work would have been to substitute an Indo-Iranian polytheistic and naturalistic religion, with a moral religion that were essentially monotheistic; and the reason for sublimating the ancient Indo-Iranian divinities with the system of entities, i.e. the six Aməša Spəntas, would have been to conserve the "analysis" of the sacred and the profane, which is implicit in polytheistic theology, where the functional structure is maintained. Nature and peculiarity of the Zoroastrian revolution: more than a "reformation" it appears to be "a reformation of a reform", a second grade reform, for the prophet had to "travailler sur un mazdéisme déjà existant, sur une religion du "Seigneur Sagesse" qui constituait déjà, par rapport au polythéisme indo-iranien, non pas une évolution, mais une révolution systématique, moralisante" [29]); and finally, the modality of such a reformation work was a precise and detailed, attent and conscient imitation of the functional structure of pre-existing theology. "C'est que le réformateur *a consciemment, attentivement et intelligemment* [30]) imité jusque dans le détail la théologie polythéiste dont il condamnait l'*esprit*, mais qu'il appréciait en tant que cadre et moyen pour l'*analyse* à la fois du concret et du sacré" [31]).

But here we may notice through that the outline of the development of ancient Iran's religiosity—paganism, Zoroastrianism, syncretism—is getting more complex, for we agree with a first "revolution", that has been taking place—we don't know how or when—in Mazdeism, against the archaic religion of the Indo-Iranian type. In fact, it is now common opinion, and many strong elements prove it, that Zoroaster was living in a milieu that had already known the cult of Ahura

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27) Dumézil, NA; *Id.*, *Tarpeia*, Paris 1947; *Id.*, *Jupiter, Mars, Quirinus*, Paris 1948; *Id.*, *Les dieux des Indo-Européens*, Paris 1952; *Id.*, *L'idéologie tripartie des Indo-Européens*, Bruxelles 1958.

28) On the two Vāy and on the two-aspects Vayu in relation with Mainyu, cf. Gnoli, *SMSR*, 36, 1965, pp. 194-198.

29) Dumézil, NA, p. 63.

30) The italics are ours.

31) Dumézil, NA, p. 186.

Mazdā, present not only in the Avesta but also in the Achaemenian inscriptions, and other topics that were anciently taken for typically Zoroastrian, as for instance the particular position of the *daēvas* [32]).

In reality, putting afore the idea of a reformation of a preceding reform is an extremely fragile expedient to save at any price, even sacrificing the yet asserted revolutionary originality of the prophet, the very idea of a reform itself, that seems necessary to explain the conscient "sublimation" of the divinities of ancient Indo-Iranian paganism, in the system of the Amәša Spәntas.

It is very significant that it was Molé, a substainer of the tripartite ideology of Dumézil, who modified the terms of the question, abandoning the idea of a reform and affirming instead the opinion of a natural evolution of Mazdeism starting from an Indo-Iranian type of religiosity [33]). It is clear that such a way of presenting the problem of the Zoroastrian origins brought with it a few other important conclusions: the historical figure of the reformer and prophet lost plenty of its contents, for the figure of Zoroaster becomes essentially a name or a symbol of a specific sacerdotal tradition, closely connected with a certain ritual and sacrificial office; the Gāthic-Vedic comparison will give—as no doubt it has already given [34])—major results for the deepening of the essence of primitive Zoroastrianism and of the structure itself of Persian religion; the vision of ancient Iran's religious world will necessarily become more unitary, for the presupposition of the famous opposition between Zoroastrianism and paganism, whether Iranian and Indo-Iranian, will be eliminated.

Here it is interesting to note that a convergency of ideas, be it partial, is noticeable, among those scholars who insist upon the "traditional" aspects of Zoroaster. Molé and Nyberg, for instance, present, of course with the due and obvious difference of insight, a figure of Zoroaster inserted in a tradition that he wants to keep up with, victoriously to affirm it, and to fight against the aberrations of the cult and against the malefic power of the *daēvas* [35]) or else defending his people and his spiritual patrimony from the frightful attacks of the Miθra community [36]). Other scholars, such as Widengren [37]) are half-

32) Cf. Molé, CMC, p. 14 ff.
33) Molé, CMC, p. 5.
34) See f.i. H. Humbach's interpretation of the *Gāθās, Die Gathas des Zarathustra*, 1-2, Heidelberg, 1959.
35) Molé, CMC, p. 7.
36) Nyberg, RAI, p. 52 ff.
37) Widengren, RI, p. 79 ff.

way: for one thing, after accepting the now classical application of the tripartite ideology to Iran by Dumézil, he insists on the doctrinal and ideological opposition of Zoroaster against the old religion of the Indo-Iranian type; and then again he stresses all the "traditional" aspects of the priest (*zaotar*) inserted in a historical frame of the Aryan Männerbund [38]).

Research work in the historical and cultural milieu of primitive Zoroastrianism, in which the Swedish school has particularly distinguished itself, has had the great merit of stressing the complex religious physionomy of ancient Iran. Thus the place taken by the personality of Zoroaster is not a single isolated one, as would suit persons or facts that are considered separate from their historical roots. To consider Zoroaster a prophet of the Hebrew type—and of a Hebrew type that is itself getting ever less correspondent to the prospects of modern scientific research [38a])—means committing a mistake of historical perspective and to a certain extent to leave this perspective entirely out of consideration. This way the prophet gets to be a personality that has been lowered from nowhere in some way into a reality deprived of any apparent relation with him. Such a kind of research work further also helps to determine better the terms of another big question. It renders most doubtful the most widely spread interpretation about the nature itself of primitive Zoroastrianism, understood as a cult without any sacrifices, free of rites, and essentially "mental" [39]), founded and professed in high antiquity [40]) by an ethical reformer, whose peculiarities would be almost similar to the ones of a theologian or a philosopher [41]) of far more recent times [42]). But if for one thing we cannot completely agree with Henning's [43]) opinion about the central position which man's dignity and his thought are keeping in Zoroastrian teaching, it seems necessary to us to recall that these fundamental characteristics of Zoroastrianism are inserted in an

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[38]) Wikander, *Der arische Männerbund*, Lund 1938.

[38a]) See above, n. 9.

[39]) See f.i. Duchesne-Guillemin, *Zoroaster*, p. 150 ff.; that refers to A. Meillet's observations, in *Trois conférences sur les Gâthâ de l'Avesta*, Paris 1925, p. 56

[40]) See Molé's right considerations, CMC, p. 4.

[41]) See f.i. A. Pagliaro, *SMSR*, 33, 1962, pp. 3-23.

[42]) Duchesne-Guillemin (RIA, p. 397) sees the danger, but we must notice that between a certain type of "Greek philosopher" and a modern "philosopher" there is a very big difference and that Zoroaster was known by the Greeks more for his operative and magic aspects than for the purely theoretic aspects of his teaching or what was held for it.

[43]) Henning, *Zoroaster*, p. 46.

anthropocentric vision where thought, as well as words, are considered essentially as "forces" or human faculties gifted with a particular executive efficacy [44]).

And this keeps us far from any abstract, discursive, contemplative concept of thought.

In previous studies we could notice how the central cult of Mazdean religion, the sacrifice of the *haoma*, was indissolubly bound to the fundamental themes of Gāthic teaching [45]). We will come back to this argument later, but here it is necessary to recall how many were the voices that rose to rectify the old opinion about a Zoroastrian condemnation of the *haoma*: as a matter of fact, it is much more likely that Zoroaster in *Yasna* XXXII, 14 has wanted to condemn some aberration of the cult, rather than the sacrificial use of the *haoma* in general [46]). On the other hand, Nyberg [47]) himself thought it possible for Zoroaster, were it then in the syncretistic and presumably mitigated period of his teaching, to have accepted the cult of Haoma. Widengren [48]) does not exclude this possibility and to others too it has appeared as likely to be so [49]).

But let this keep us up for a while. The only argument of a certain value that may support the thesis of a Zoroastrian condemnation of Haoma is founded on a particular interpretation of the already mentioned quotation of the *Gāθā ahunavaiti*; since it would be absolutely arbitrary to see any reference to the *haoma* in the other quotation of the *Gāθā spəntamainyu* [50]) at times compared with the former. In the *Gāθā spəntamainyu* they inveigh against the filth of a certain liquor (*mūθrəm ahyā madahyā*) used by the *karapan*, but absolutely nothing proves that a similar despising expression would be used against the *haoma*. In *Yasna* XXXII, 14, instead, there is a secure reference to the *haoma*, that is here referred to with the epithet of *dūraoša-* "that

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[44]) These magic-ecstatic aspects of Zoroastrianism are well treated by Nyberg, RAI, and further by M. Eliade, *Le chamanisme et les techniques archaïques de l'extase*, 2nd ed., Paris 1968, p. 312 and ff.

[45]) Gnoli, in *Antaios*, 8, 1967, pp. 528-549.

[46]) Cf. Zaehner and Molé in the quotations mentioned in notes 25 and 26 and further Molé, *RHR*, 162, 1962, p. 161 ff. M. Boyce, *JRAS*, 1966, p. 110 ff., widens the critic to the thesis of a presumed condemnation of the animal sacrifice.

[47]) Nyberg, RAI, p. 287.

[48]) Widengren, RI, p. 131.

[49]) See f.i. A. Bausani, *Persia religiosa*, Milano 1959, p. 42.

[50]) *Y.* XLVIII, 10.

keeps death away" [51]), which is familiar to it. The meaning of the quotation is very obscure [52]) but what should immediately be pointed out is the absurdity of a presumable condemnation of the *haoma* being expressed with an epithet that enhances the very benefic nature of it and its power of victory over death [53]). These elements being so fragile that they may even be turned upside down to serve in favour of the opposite synthesis, it seems at least absurd to conclude that what may be defined the central act of the Mazdean liturgy in all of its known history and what is perfectly justified and is well integrated in the Zoroastrian ideology, as we have tried to explain elsewhere [54]), would have been condemned by Zoroaster, immediately to have been adopted by his followers afterwards. Far more than a most uncertain interpretation of an obscure Gāthic verset would be needed to support a thesis of such an importance. Zoroaster's condemning Haoma is thus to be considered one of those pillars of the traditional interpretation of Zoroastrian origins that more recent studies seem to have definitively destroyed [55]).

Another pillar of the traditional interpretation is the so-called "demonisation of the *daēvas*". As a matter of fact, as far as this problem is concerned, the Indian situation was generally accepted as being the original one, or the closest to the supposed Aryan origins. Iran had renewed the concept of Vedas and such a renovation had been attributed to Zoroaster's conscient work. If then, in ancient India the *devas* were positive good-hearted deities and the *asuras* adverse forces, in Iran, transformed by the Zoroastrian reformation, the *daēvas*—following to such a wide-spread opinion—had to be the demonized ancient deities of polytheism, condemned by the reformer, decayed from their level, while one of the *ahuras*, the Gāthic Mazdā, was put on top of

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51) Bartholomae, *AirWb*, 751-752. H. W. Bailey (*BSOAS*, 20, 1957, p. 57) interprets said adjective in another way and does not accept the common translation that is based on Pahlavī comment.

52) For various interpretations: Bartholomae, *Die Gatha's des Awesta. Zarathustra's Verspredigten*, Strassburg, 1905, p. 31; H. Lommel, in *Wörter und Sachen*, 1938, p. 205; Nyberg, RAI, p. 189; E. Herzfeld, *Zoroaster and his World*, Princeton 1947, p. 348; Duchesne-Guillemin, *Zoroastre*, p. 256; Humbach, *Die Gathas des Zarathustra*, cit., I., p. 141; II, p. 137; Zaehner, *The Teachings of the Magi*, London 1956, p. 127; *Id.*, DTZ, p. 85; Molé, CMC, pp. 229-230; *Id.*, *RHR*, 162, 1962, p. 161 ff.

53) Thus already rightly Zaehner, *loc. cit.*

54) See n. 45.

55) Especially Zaehner has proved the lack of foundation of the traditional theses in the interesting chapter of his work, DTZ, dedicated to the cult.

the divine hierarchy and glorified as a unique and supreme deity. Already Benveniste very justly precised how such a demonisation was not typical and unique for Zoroastrianism, but had more ancient origins in the Gāthic teaching [56]).

Documentation for the opposition against the *daivas* has been taken from heterogeneous sources. We may find it in the *Gāθās*, in Xerxes' inscription at Persepolis, in *Vendīdād*, in Plutarch's *De Iside et Osiride*, not to mention other maybe less significant sources of less use to us for entering the problem in its essential concept.

It is obvious that no interpretation of the nature of Gāthic *daēvas* may prescind from a global vision of the pan-Iranian problem of the *daivas*. Now there is not much to be said, at first sight, about the *daivas* in Xerxes' inscription: we know nothing about them, except for the fact that they were venerated with a special cult in vast Achaemenian dominions [57]). But who they were, and in what countries inside or outside Iran [58]) they were venerated is an information that cannot be found anywhere, which in effect leaves an open door to various hypotheses [59]). As far as the *daēvas* of the *Vendīdād* are concerned, their demoniac nature of negative and destructive forces is very clear, as opposed to the *aŝa* world: the demons of laziness, of fever, of aridity etc.; in one word, a general frame that recalls very closely the complex Mesopotamian demonology [60]). If in traditional Mazdean pandaemonium a few very rare ancient Aryan divinities may be found, such as Indra, Saurva, Nåŋhaiθya [61]), etc., these are but mere names and their figures have become so slender and dull that the presumed original features of these divinities are not to be recognized any longer. But the major part of the Iranian *daivas* carry new names—new, that is, with respect to their so-called Aryan origins—names that are usually de-

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56) Benveniste, PR, p. 39 ff.

57) *XPh* 35-41.

58) To Nyberg, f.i. (RAI, p. 365 ff.), the *daivadāna* of the inscription of Xerxes at Persepolis is the temple of Marduk in Babylon; an opinion that has been shared by Widengren (RI, pp. 131, n. 1, 138). See now also Duchesne-Guillemin, in *Persica*, 3, 1967-1968, p. 1 ff.

59) A. Christensen, *Essai sur la démonologie iranienne*, København 1941, p. 39 ff.

60) Cf. E. Dhorme, *Les religions de Babylonie et d'Assyrie*, p. 265, ff. in E. Dhorme-R. Dussaud, *Les religions de Babylonie et d'Assyrie. Les religions des hittites et des hourrites, des phéniciens et des syriens*, Paris 1949. To be noted also a certain category of demons that have the name of *ilu* 'god', and that, not being evil by nature, are determined with the adjective *limnu* 'evil'.

61) L. H. Gray, *The Foundations of the Iranian Religions*, Bombay 1929, p. 181 ff.

scribing their respective functions in their fight against the benefic forces.

The symmetrical opposition of the 24 Plutarchean demons, that stand against as many Ohrmazdean beings inside the cosmic egg [62]), suits perfectly in the Mazdean system [63]). In fact, we know that a series of demons that constitute Ahriman's suite, is symmetrically opposed to a corresponding series of Amәša Spәntas. Such a rigidly symmetric concept is of basic importance for the comprehension of Iranian dualism. It reflects in demonology and angelology and particularly in the duality of Aša and Drug, of Spәnta Mainyu and Aŋra Mainyu, in the double-sided Vayu or in Vāy ī vēh and in Vāy ī vattar of the Pahlavī texts [64]) and is not substantially different, in our opinion, from the Gāthic concept that makes the day go with the night, the light with the darkness [65]), and life with no-life [66]). Actually, it is in this concept that we may find the key of it. Any created thing has its opposite, that may be defined as its shadow. Light does not exist without the dark, nor does the day without the night, nor does life without death; everything that is, everything that exists, is and exists due to its opposite that constitutes as it were the limits of, or the necessary condition. Everything that is manifested—the *gētīg* of the Mazdean cosmology [67]) —necessarily has its opposite which, at the same time, constitutes the negation of it and the indispensable condition to determine its existence in a concrete form. But such a negation, such a shadow is not pertaining to the kingdom of manifested beings, it does not belong to real creation, fruit of Ahura Mazdā's labour; it is proper instead to an Ahrimanian "counter-creation" that could not be expressed on the concrete reality: this is why the Ahrimanian creation does not manifest itself, following Mazdean cosmology and cosmogony rules, on a *gētīg* existence level [68]) but rather remains in an "ideal" zone, or *mēnōg*, as it were a shady zone, that represents the great negative of sensible reality, of the world of forms and of manifestation.

We will come back to these questions elsewhere. Right now it is

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62) Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*, 47; cf. J. Bidez-F. Cumont, *Les mages hellénisés*, Paris 1938, II, p. 71.

63) Gnoli, *AIUON*, N.S., 12, 1962, p. 113 ff.

64) On Vayu in general, see Wikander, *Vayu*, I, Uppsala 1941 and see above, n. 28.

65) *Y.* XLIV, 3-7.

66) *Y.* XXX, 4.

67) On *mēnōg* and *gētīg*, see Gnoli, *AIUON*, N.S., 13, 1963, p. 180 ff.

68) Cf. Zaehner, DTZ, p. 216.

necessary to admit that the symmetric order of the Mazdean dualistic formula [69]) is not due to an effort to classify or to a theoretical ordering of the pantheon and the pandaemonium, but it is co-natural to the very dualistic concept itself that characterizes the religious world of pre-Islamic Iran [70]). In such a concept, as this, in which everything, every being, every action has its opposite, the idea of choice between two opposite possibilities, that is typical for the Zoroastrian anthropology [71]), is perfectly explainable. It has been observed that in the thought of him who created them, the names of Spənta and Aŋra belonging to the two Mainyu could not have existed, before their choice between life and no-life had been made: Spənta and Aŋra are definitions that signify the result of the choice [72]). Thus the *daēvas* are not evil of themselves, but only because they have chosen the Worse Thought, *ačišta manah* [73]).

But for the *daivas*, as first we did for the *haoma*, we must remember that the traditional idea that saw in the demonisation of the *daivas* as a sign of the revolutionary work of the prophet of monotheism [74]) may not be retained any longer. The so-called demonisation of the *daivas* is a pan-Iranian phenomenon and not necessarily a strictly spoken Zoroastrian one. No reason, no particular proof—except for wanting to make the texts tell us more than what they contain themselves—may carry us to believe that here or there it had any differences in its meanings or in its origins; the main Iranian divinities, and first of all Miθra and Anāhitā—whose cult is documented not only by the "recent" Avesta but also by the whole of ancient Iran's religious history, very well known to the classical authors and spread in the entire area of Iranian and Iranized world and even outside of it—were never con-

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[69]) The dualistic problem has been treated thoroughly by U. Bianchi, (*Zamān i Ōhrmazd*, Torino 1958, pp. 18 ff.; 24 ff.; 70 ff., 81 ff.; 95 ff.; *Il dualismo religioso*, Roma 1958, pp. 26 ff., 204 note), whose theses we are not agreeing with on this argument: *AIUON*, N.S., 12, 1962, pp. 112-113.

[70]) Without any solid foundation, the social interpretations of Iranian dualism, in spite of the efforts made in such a sense by S. P. Tolstov, *Drevnyj Xorezm*, Moskva 1948, pp. 286-291, and by A. Jensen, in *Studium Generale*, 1, 1947-1948, pp. 38-48; *Id.*, *Mythes et cultes chez les peuples primitifs*, Paris 1954, p. 271.

[71]) On Iranian religious anthropology cf. Bailey, *Zoroastrian Problems in the Ninth-Century Books*, Oxford 1943, pp. 78-119; Duchesne-Guillemin, in *Anthropologie religieuse*, ed. C. J. Bleeker, Leiden 1955, pp. 93-107; Widengren, *Stand und Aufgaben*, p. 30 ff.

[72]) Gershevitch, *JNES*, 23, 1964, p. 13.

[73]) *Y.* XXX, 6.

[74]) Further, Pettazzoni, *Essays on the History of Religions*, Leiden 1954, p. 6 ff.

demned as being *daiva* [75]). They may be called *baga* [76]), *ahura* [77]), *yazata* [78]), but never *daiva* [79]). The *daivas* are essentially demoniac beings that represent the symmetric opposite of as many divine powers, in the frame of Mazdean dualistic concept, and that are malefic and negative due to their having badly chosen the Worse Thought [80]); demons of the winter, of the darkness, of the night, of dryness, of laziness, of fever [81]), they are labouring in the obscure Ahrimanian creation, a congenitally negative production that could not be transferred on a real existential level, an abortion that disordered passion, indolence, ignorance keep alife, ghosts that obnubilate man's thought and powers in their striving to affirm Ahura Mazdā's reign on earth.

And this goes for Ahura Mazdā as well as for the *haoma* and for the *daivas*. Nowadays it is not thought anymore, as it was long ago, that such a divinity was a creation of the prophet, the unique and supreme god in whose name Zoroaster would have fought against ancient polytheism [82]). It may be discussed whether the *Gāθās* do not accentuate particularly the "monotheistic" nature of the supreme god, confronted with the other parts of the Avesta, but never could we deny the pan-Iranian nature of Ahura Mazdā. Ever since the Achaemenian inscriptions, in which nothing allows to refer to the Zoroastrian ideology [83]), until up to the Khotanese pre-Buddhist world [84]) Ahura Mazdā stands out on top of the pantheon, as the biggest of the deities, *maθišta bagānām* [85]), *bagān abardom* [86]).

Of course, much has been said about the origins of this great Iranian

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[75]) Molé, CMC, p. 21. About the opposition *ahuras-daivas* Molé (*ibid.*, p. 5) justly asks himself where the innovation must be looked for, whether in Iran or in India. On Miθra see now Boyce, *BSOAS* 32, 1969, p. 10 ff.

[76]) On *baga* see lately Duchesne-Guillemin, in *Festschrift für Wilhelm Eilers*, Wiesbaden 1967, pp. 157-158.

[77]) Miθra and Apąm Napāt are *ahura*: cf. Gershevitch, AHM p. 59.

[78]) Molé, CMC, p. 5.

[79]) See above, n. 75. Humbach is wrong in his interpretation of Surx Kotal's inscription, where he reconstructs a *daiva* Miθra (*Miyro.....deioo*); cf. Humbach, *Die Kaniška Inschrift Von Surkh Kotal*, Wiesbaden 1960, pp. 54-55.

[80]) As far as the syntagma *daēva-|mašya-* is concerned, see lately Benveniste, in *Festschrift Eilers*, cit., pp. 144-147.

[81]) Bianchi, *Zamān i Ōhrmazd*, cit., pp. 25-26, is not far from this interpretation.

[82]) For this question, see Molé, CMC, p. 5 ff.

[83]) For the Achaemenian religion cf. Duchesne-Guillemin, RIA, p. 154 ff.; Molé CMC, p. 26 ff.; Widengren, RI, p. 117 ff.; Gnoli, *SMSR*, 35, 1964, pp.239-250.

[84]) Bailey, in *Iranistik* (*Handbuch der Orientalistik* I, 4, 1), Leiden 1958, p. 134.

[85]) To be found in Achaemenian inscriptions: *Auramazdā hya maθišta bagānām.*

[86]) *DkM* 8.15.1: see Molé, CMC, pp. 66-67.

god, for his composite name is not to be found in the Vedas and thus any possibility of an easy Indo-Iranian comparison fails here. Nevertheless, but for the difficulty of his name, to a good many of scholars a comparison with the Indian Varuṇa has imposed itself in various ways and with different arguments [87]). In Dumézil's complex reconstruction of the correspondence between the Amәša Spәntas and the so-called functional series of the Indo-Iranian divinities [88]) Ahura Mazdā is linked to Aša in his proposed correspondence with Varuṇa [89]). In some other opinion, instead, the comparison of Ahura Mazdā with Varuṇa proves unjustified [90]). Gershevitch, basing himself on Hillebrandt's theory, after having abandoned the positions that he had taken in a volume dedicated to *Mihr Yašt* [91]), feels very much for a common derivation of an Iranian *Ahura* "who partly survived in Zoroaster's *Ahura Mazdāh*", and a Vedic *Asura*, "who was generally referred to by his epithet *Varuṇa*", from an Indo-Iranian divinity, with the very simple name of *Asura* [92]).

But apart from its Aryan origins, what interests us here is the extreme likeliness, if not the certainty, that Ahura Mazdā be the supreme Iranian divinity that, according to the majority of the scholars, had been existing already in the epoch presumably anterior to Zoroaster's so-called reformation.

Furthermore, the same opposition *aša-drug* has its exact parallel in India in the opposition *ṛtá-druh* [93]); the doctrine of the sacrifice is substantially unitary in the two branches of the Aryan people [94]); the dualistic concept, that reflects in the polarity *daivas-ahuras* and *asuras-devas*, is present here as well as there, were it then with a more marked accent at the Persian side, and with a particular colour, probably due to an occidental influence [95]); in India a phenomenon of hypostati-

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87) For this question: Duchesne-Guillemin, RIA, p. 172 ff.; Widengren RI, p. 82.

88) For a critic of such correspondences and more generally of the very foundation of the tripartite ideology of Dumézil, see Gnoli, *SMSR*, 36, 1965, pp.193-210. It must be considered that it is neither certain nor to be proven that the social tripartition is the primary facet of tripartite ideology; on the contrary, many elements do not agree with such a thesis (*ibid.*, p. 206 ff.).

89) Duchesne-Guillemin, RIA, p. 193 ff.; Widengren, RI, p. 79 ff.

90) H. Lommel, *Die Religion Zarathustras*, Tübingen 1930, p. 272 ff.

91) Ghershevitch, AHM, pp. 3-72.

92) Gershevitch, *JNES*, 23, 1964, p. 12, n. 1.

93) Molé, CMC, p. 5.

94) *Ibid.*

95) An influence of Mesopotamian conception even on Iranian dualism is not to be excluded.

zation was not completely ignored, as is the case with Aramati [96]), similar to what may be found in a larger and a more systematical way in the Amәša Spәntas; all this, together with the already discussed items, necessarily brings to the conclusion that any revolutionary reform perpetrated by Zoroaster on the body of a pre-existing Indo-Iranian paganism proves to be void of any serious foundation and intrinsic necessity.

From these considerations it will be easy to reach less critical and more constructive conclusions. Since, except for uncertain and discussible hypotheses founded on fragile methodological presuppositions, there really exist no sufficient elements to demonstrate that at a certain epoch in a determined part of the Iranian world a supreme divinity might have been venerated that did not carry the name of Ahura Mazdā, and since, on the contrary, in different epochs and regions, we can see the figure of this god at the head of a religious system, we may well, for the sake of correctness in method, call the religion of ancient Iran [97]) "Mazdeism". Herewith we certainly do not want to deny the possibility, and in many cases even the certainty, of the existence of different forms and trends, at times even contrasting ones, inside the Iranian religiosity; nor should we in any case diminish the importance of the various historical perspectives that recent and less recent researches on Persian religion have rewarded us with. We wish, instead, only to deny that Mazdeism was one of the many other religions existing in ancient Iran, and to deny even more categorically that it was the religion founded by Zoroaster, the reformer.

Such an insight may not and should not cause a static levelling of the religious history of Persia, which is something that has unfortunately occurred in Molé's yet excellent book [98]). In his original application of Dumézil's functional theory [99]) structure has undoubtedly overwhelmed history. The doctrine, to be found in the Pahlavī texts, of the tripartition of religion in *gāhānīg, hādamānsrīg* and *dādīg*, from the most internal level to the most external or exoteric one, doctrine produced—due to Molé—by an interiorisation of the social functions

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96) Molé, CMC, p. 5; Wesendonk, *ARW*, 28, 1929, p. 61 ff.; Duchesne-Guillemin, RIA, p. 197; Widengren, RI, p. 79 ff.

97) About such an unitary vision in Iranian religious world Bianchi and Molé agree in their already cited works.

98) Cf. recension to Molé, CMC: Gnoli, *RSO*, 40, 1965, pp. 334-343.

99) Molé's originality gets appreciated especially because he has substituted the concept of evolution to that of reformation.

and by their transposition on an ethic level [100]), is used to explain, within the limits of the structure itself, in different epoch and milieu, from the Achaemenians to the Sassanians, every variety of tendencies and trends inside the Persian religion [101]).

As the ancient Iran's ethnic religion, Mazdeism is not the result of a revolution or of a reformation, but the final product of a slow process of transformation of a kind of more ancient Aryan religiosity; a process that has developed this side of the Indus, parallel with and analogous to what happened at the other side of the big historical stream with the Vedic religion and its successive developments [102]). No doubt that, as with the evolution and the nature of the Aryan religion in India the influence of a non-Aryan substrate was determinant, with Mazdeism also the influence of civilizations and cultures that had already affirmed their existence in Iranian highlands was of major importance. As far as this is concerned from the historical point of view it would be very interesting to be able to individualize, better than what has been tried out rudimentally and asystematically for the time being, the occidental elements, most of which are Mesopotamian, that have merged with ancient Iran's religiosity.

The origin of many equivocations, most common in the researches on Persian religion, is due, among other things, to a continuous oscillation of the notions of "Mazdeism" and "Zoroastrianism". An oscillation that causes a very common confusion of terms and that could be avoided, if we were to consider Gāthic teaching as a plain "Zoroastrianism" [103]). Seen in this light, though, Zoroastrianism is no longer a "religion", but, as a matter of fact, it becomes a particular doctrine that is built on a determined religious tradition, the Mazdean religion; it is no religion in itself in the common concept of the word, because in itself it has no rites of its own nor has it characteristics that differenciate it from Mazdeism. The fact that in the *Gāθās* no mention is made of Miθra or Anāhitā does in no way mean that Zoroaster—whatever

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100) Molé, CMC, p. 60.

101) For a critic on Molé's theories from a historical point of view, see, the review quoted above, and Gnoli, *SMSR*, 35, 1964, pp. 239-250.

102) On continuity of Indian religion, see J. Gonda, *The Vision of the Vedic Poets*, The Hague, 1963; *Id.*, *Change and Continuity in Indian Religion*, The Hague 1965. Cf. furthermore C. Pensa, *AIUON*, N. S., 19, 1969, pp. 217-259.

103) For other definitions that may be found in studies on Persian religion (*Zarathuštrianism, Zarathuštricism, Zoroastrianism*, to indicate the three "versions" of the doctrine of Zoroaster): Gershevitch, *JNES*, 23, 1964, pp. 12, 32.

opinion one may have about his historical figure—be a promotor of a religion that is hostile to the cult of Miθra or Anāhitā or any other divine entity. In fact, the *Gāθās* are not the theological synthesis of Zoroastrianism, but ritual texts that accompany and illustrate a particular aspect of religious experience, centered on the sacrifice of the *haoma* [104]) and on human communion with the divine faculties and virtues [105]). To pretend the *Gāθās* to be a complete theory of the many aspects, doctrinal, liturgical and ethical, that a religion is made of, would be absurd. On the other hand, not even the examination of Greek sources allows to see in Zoroastrianism a religion of its own: to the Greeks Zoroaster was a wise man, an initiate, and the Magi were priests that possessed secret doctrines, not always identical the one to the other [106]). This way the Gāthic teaching, or, if we feel for it, Zoroastrianism, in its fundamental texts, will have to be considered as one of these doctrines, to which a determined priestly tradition gave the name of Zoroaster. Zoroastrianism is an internal aspect of Mazdeism, an élite doctrine, a sacerdotal or initiating teaching that contains precise references to certain interpretations of sacrificial practice and to its use for spiritual human development's sake.

From these considerations there results a substantial unity of the Iranian religious world, notwithstanding those undiscussible varieties that were determined by the various historical situations in which occidental and oriental highlands became involved around 500 B.C. In fact, it is obvious that the formation of a centralizing monarchy, first with the Medes and then with the Persians who extended the borders of their country from the Indus and the Jaxartes to the Nile, the Aegean Sea and the Black Sea, must have modified in quite a way some of the original aspects of Mazdeism, that were connecting it more directly with its Indo-Iranian origins. To this we should add the importance of Mesopotamian influence, that certainly must have been very strong under the Achaemenians, testimony of which is the use of the big architectonic unit of the Persepolis terrace, consacrated, as we know, to the celebration of New Year, an *akîtu* brought over

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104) Gnoli, in *Antaios*, 8, 1967, p. 542 ff.

105) Gnoli, *AIUON*, N.S., 15, 1965, pp. 105-117; *Id.*, in *Antaios*, 11, 1969, p. 286 ff.

106) On the problem of the Magi, see above all G. Messina, *Der Ursprung der Magier und die zarathuštrische Religion*, Roma 1930; Benveniste, *Les Mages dans l'Ancien Iran*, Paris 1938. On diversity of opinions existing between the Magi, cf. Bidez-Cumont, *Les Mages hellénisés*, cit., I, p. 58.

to an Iranian milieu, with the same exaltation of majesty that was given to it and protected by the supreme god [107]).

Now only if we do consider the development and the nature of the events that brought to the formation of Persian monarchy and to its consolidation in all of occidental Asia, will we be able to have a clear sight of the characteristic aspect that differentiated the so-called "Achaemenian religion" from those forms of Mazdeism, whether more ancient or not involved with the same historical process, such as the ones that were prosperous in the more oriental regions of Iranian highlands. Typical for Achaemenian Mazdeism is the public cult, made on behalf of the State or of the king, the prayer addressed to Ahura Mazdā, not only to obtain one's own ends through one's private sacrifice, but—as Herodotus writes [108])—"for the welfare of the king and of all the Persians". In the Achaemenian inscriptions Ahura Mazdā is that great god to whom the entire cosmic order is reconducted, but he is, first of all, the king's god, the source of kingship, that is herewith gaining inviolability. Such a historical development of Mazdeism in Achaemenian epoch, that could not happen without violent hurts [109]) did not, for all this, give way to a new religion, but caused only a different orientation of cult, from then on ever more turned towards the great State organ's public aims.

Neither may considerations of a theoretical more than a historical nature put the substantial unity of Iranian religion in question. In its more ancient forms, i.e. if not at the time of the archaistic renaissance of the Abbasid period, at least during the late Sassanian epoch, this religion had no theology, nor could it be believed that the Persians were nurturing their philosophical worries about keeping their monotheism "pure", their dualism "absolute" or resolving a so-called absurdity of "symmetrical dualism" with a solution that would safeguard, indeed

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[107]) R. Ghirshman, *AAs*, 20, 1957, pp. 265-278; A. U. Pope, in *Archaeology*, 10, 1957, pp. 123-130; K. Erdmann, in *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft*, 92, 1960, pp. 21-47. [108]) Herodotus I, 132.

[109]) The event of the fight between the Magian Gaumāta, the false Smerdis — behind whom A. T. Olmstead (*History of the Persian Empire*, Chicago 1960, 3rd ed., pp. 92 f., 107 ff.) has seen the true Bardiya, Cyrus II's son, thus throwing the traditional opinion over — must be inserted in the historical frame that justifies the explosion of strong rivalities between groups of Median Magi, bringers of the Zoroastrian sacerdotal doctrine, the Achaemenian clan and the warrior aristocracy of Persis. In his recent work that has appeared in *Festschrift für Leo Brandt zum 60. Geburtstag*, Köln und Opladen 1968, pp. 517-522, Widengren has examined the whole question very thoroughly, and has reached the conclusion which we share completely, that the Magian Gaumāta was the representative of the interests of the Median sacerdotal cast.

very abstractly, the logic of their theogonic and cosmogonic doctrines. Worries of this kind rose only when their contacts with other religions, especially with Christianity and Islam, made the discussion of fundamental themes in monotheism and dualism necessary [110]). But the ancient religion consisted essentially in a set of rites, to which a magic efficiency was granted, and of prescriptions, sacrificial practices, whether propitiatory or apotropaical, of myths, that were resting on rather scarce and fragmentary truths [111]), the whole of which was crowned by the faith in a celestial supreme god and by a cult attributed to the elements and the luminaries of the cosmos [112]), in which they recognized the different manifestations of divine power. The doctrines were the priests' patrimony and were mostly secret, for initiates only [113]). The Magi celebrated the cult, the sacrifices that were asked them [114]) to get this or that favour: for the lay people this was the final scope of the rite and the cult to the deity, and there was nothing more to it. And the fact that the Magi might have had doctrines of their own, that may have been different the one from the other [115]) over particular items, is more than natural, as it is also most natural that these doctrines were essentially directed towards the knowledge of the laws that were regulating their activities as priests, and that were justifying it: speculations on rite, on sacrifice, on its efficacy, on anything that had to do with the liturgical practice, as for instance the conditions for a rite to be pure, and then of course also the study of the notion of the deity itself.

In such a unitary frame, the nowadays traditional problem of Zurvanism requires a few words explanation; since it has been at the center of a very important scientific discussion that has not yet been definitively solved [116]). To us the so-called Zurvanism is not to be considered as an "heresy"—this being a concept that is doubtlessly to be found very lately in the Iranian world—of Mazdeism; nor is it to

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110) We must consider that a source as *Škand-gumānīg wizār* must be valued in this perspective: the originality of what derives from a reaction is always very relative and limited.

111) On the Iranian myth: A. Bausani, in *La Persia e il mondo Greco-romano*, Roma 1966, pp. 413-421.

112) Herodotus, I, 131.

113) Cf. Molé, CMC, p. 78 ff.

114) Molé, CMC, p. 157 ff., where there is also an accurate comparison between Gāthic and Vedic conceptions.

115) See above, n. 106.

116) Molé's study on the Zurvanite problem is fundamental: *JA*, 247, 1959, pp. 431-469.

be taken as an autonomous religion, but rather as a particular aspect of those doctrines of the Magi that were concerning sacrifice and cosmogony [117]). Even in Zurvanism, inside of which it is certainly exaggerated to distinguish various forms, one "classical", another "materialistic", and another still "fatalistic", the way Zaehner [118]) proposes, Ohrmazd remains the enlightening, active principle, the fighting element against the Ahrimanian darkness [119]) while the Limited Time (*Zurvān ī kanāragōmand*) is nothing but the instrument that will bring light to victory, and the Unlimited Time (*Zurvān ī akanārag*) is nothing but the initial condition of perfect quietness from where the movement had its origin, giving life to matter in a continuous evolution. From this point of view Time and Space do not represent a supreme god, but rather the motionless and infinite indifferentiate, the milieu, we could call it, in which the very opposed principles themselves—light and darkness—had their origin [120]).

Looking through the problems of Persian religious history that have been discussed during the last years, that were of major importance in our opinion, we have limited ourselves to the main definitions and to the interpretations of the historical meaning of Zoroastrianism in the religious world of ancient Orient. This way I have tried to give an exact definition of the terms "Mazdeism" and "Zoroastrianism", after having pointed out that many elements are now in favour of a unitary vision of pre-Islamic Iranian religiosity and of its gradual evolution from its Aryan prehistorical origins up to the forms that are known to us. But we have said nothing yet about an eminently historical problem, of main importance; we believe that it is advisable to talk about it here, as the conclusions that we will advance for this problem implicitly reinforce the outline that we have been giving to our thesis from the start.

There is another reason too, for which we have delayed the matter until now. This is why: while for the arguments that we have discussed before, our personal contribution in the research had certainly not been pre-eminent, it being substantially limited to a work of synthesis and classification of data, and various hypotheses, here instead we are

117) Molé, CMC, p. 130 ff., who cites a communication done by P. J. de Menasce at the *Société asiatique* in 1953: "Le Diable né du doute: Mythologie et rituel".

118) Zaehner, DTZ, Part II.

119) Bianchi, *Zamān i Ōhrmazd*, cit., passim.

120) For Time and Space as *archai* cf. Bianchi, *ibid.*, p. 112 ff., where the testimony of Damascius, up to Eudemus of Rhodes, is examined.

basing our last argument essentially on a survey of ours, that was published two years ago [121]).

In these last years it has been commonly believed among the Iranian scholars, that the probable home-country of the *Gāθās* is doubtlessly to be found in East Iran [122]), the north-eastern and boundary region called Chorasmia or better still the so-called "Great Chorasmia" [123]). Truly, next to such an hypothesis others are still subsisting, that are sometimes yet considered as possible [124]), such as the one suggesting Sogdiana [125]) or Bactriana [126]), but the Chorasmian hypothesis, already prepared by the identifications of the Airyana Vaējah proposed by Markwart [127]) and by Benveniste [128]), has gradually taken advantage over all the others from the time when Henning expressed it with much precision and security in the small booklet that was to demolish the theories of Herzfeld and Nyberg [129]).

And here, without entering into the details of an extremely complex discussion—as are all the discussions regarding the historical geography of ancient Iran—for a better insight of which I would rather refer to the foresaid survey of mine, it will be useful to mention the main results, regarding the problem of individualization of the primitive "Gāthic" or "Zoroastrian" milieu.

First of all a critical examination of the list of countries of the first *fargard* of *Vendīdād* should bring to logical evidence, as Gershewitch [130]) already realized, that the "Zoroastrian Raγa" should be looked for, not in the west but in the east of the Iranian highland, and —we may add—more precisely in the south-eastern zone, close to Haētumant, precisely in the basin of Hilmand, which means that the traditional identification with Rayy, in the Raghian Media definitively should be abandoned. Furthermore, Diodorus Siculus' information, derived from the trustworthy sources among historians of Alexander, Haecataeus of Abdera or Megasthenes [131]), in the expression παρὰ . . .

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121) Gnoli, *Sīstān*.
122) Widengren, RI, p. 60.
123) Henning, *Zoroaster*, p. 42 ff.
124) See for instance Widengren, RI, *loc. cit.*
125) Nyberg, RAI, pp. 251 ff. and 463 and note 1 of p. 252.
126) Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism*, London 1903, pp. IX, 83 ff. and 90.
127) J. Markwart, *Ērānšahr*, Berlin 1901, pp. 118, 155.
128) Benveniste, *BSOS*, 7, 1933-1935, pp. 265-274; cf. Gnoli, *RSO*, 41, 1966, pp. 67-75; *ibid.*, pp. 329-334.
129) Henning, *op. cit.*
130) Gershevitch, *JNES*, 23, 1964, p. 37.
131) Gnoli, *Sīstān*, pp. 53-62.

τοῖς 'Αριανοῖς Ζαθραύστην . . . clearly refers to an Iranian idea of Zoroaster in Airyana Vaējah [132]); not only, but, as we have tried to demonstrate [133]), it contains a much more precise indication than had been thought hitherto, for the *Arianoi*, far from having to be identified generically with the Iranians, must be understood properly as a people living in the vast south-eastern region of Iran, that from Alexander's epoch on was known to the Greeks under the name of Arianē [134]). Furthermore, if, in reading Diodorus Siculus' quotation, we would prefer the lectio difficilior *Arimaspois* to *Arianois*, that is to be found in one of the most ancient and trustworthy codices, then the geographical indication would be even more precise [135]). In fact, it is known that Diodorus Siculus [136]), Justin [137]), Curtius Rufus [138]) mix the *Ariaspai Euergétai*, that Alexander meets during his expedition alongside the southern part of the Hilmand, with the Arimaspoi, the "one-eyed" people Herodotus [139]) was talking about, that Greek authors locate at north of the Scythians and the Issedons [140]). If we were to exchange the word *Arianois* with *Ariaspois*, then our source would collocate Zoroaster with the Sistanic people of the Ariaspai [141]). Not only could this solution explain the exchange "Ariaspai-Arianoi", since the term Arianoi would then be a more vast one for Ariaspai, where the former would indicate only one of the peoples of the Arianē [142]); but it could also show the typical peculiarity of this Sistanic people, whom Alexander got in touch with, and for which we find a description in Greek sources [143]): the Ariaspai—they tell us—that had in former times been granted the title of *euergétai* [144]) due to the help they gave to Cyrus II in a Scythian campaign, were governed by very civil laws, which made them excel above their

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132) Thus, rightly, Gershevitch, *JNES*, 23, 1964, p. 28, n. 49.
133) Gnoli, *Sīstān*, p. 85.
134) Gnoli, *Sīstān*, p. 81 ff.
135) F. Vogel, *Diodori Bibliotheca Historica*, I, Lipsiae 1888, p. XVI.
136) For testimony see Gnoli, *Sīstān*, p. 49: Diodorus Siculus, XVII, 81, 1.
137) Justin XII, 5, 1.
138) Curtius Rufus VII, 3, 1.
139) Herodotus III, 116; IV, 13, 27.
140) W. Tomaschek, *SWAW*, 116, 1888, pp. 715-780; E. D. Phillips, *AAs*, 18, 1955, pp. 161-177; cf. Gnoli, *Sīstān*, pp. 49-50.
141) Gnoli, *Sīstān*, p. 60 .
142) On the notion of Arianē see Gnoli, *RSO*, 41, 1966, pp. 329-334; *Id.*, *Sīstān*, p. 81 ff.
143) For which see *Sīstān*, p. 47 ff.
144) For the Iranian equivalent, probably *urvaθa-* plus suffix *-nk*, as Markwart said (*Wehrot und Arang*, Leiden 1938, p. 24), cf. Gnoli, *Sīstān*, p. 48, n. 2.

neighbour countries, and appear, in every way, similar to the best of the Greeks [145]). And here, the fact that Diodorus Siculus' mention of Zoroaster is inserted in the famous quotation about the lawmakers (Menes, Minos, Lycurgus, Zalmoxis, Moses) [146]) proves very significant to me [147]).

Other arguments that we have exposed elsewhere reinforce these conclusions [148]); we could mention here that the theory of the "Great Chorasmia"—i.e. a pre-Achaemenian Chorasmian State, that extended its hegemony with a federative structure to the Margiana and the Areia [149])—is founded on no solid argument of itself, and, as we believe already to have demonstrated, is to be considered not only improbable, but most definitely erroneous [150]).

And herewith Henning's reconstruction of the historical milieu and the figure of Zoroaster collapses: the very idea of a Chorasmian confederation that would have had Vištāspa as its political head and Zoroaster for religious guide; a State deprived of any history, that had dissolved without leaving any trace because it had been destroyed by Cyrus II only one generation ahead of Zoroaster [151]). It is even astonishing that Henning who had proposed to destroy very acutely Herzfeld's historical story about Zoroaster's life, could himself build such a hypothesis that would be exposed—although in a less pronounced way—to a very analogous criticism.

In reality, the very problem of the historicity of Zoroaster himself, that many Iranists seem not to put in question at all, should be completely taken up again, at the light of the sources that are available, in a systematic and non-preconceived way. It is certainly not our intention here to go into the problem, but we believe it is necessary to indicate a perspective which could completely change the ideas held, in case future research would confirm it.

As things are today it would certainly be exaggerated to affirm: "Zoroaster has never existed"; but I believe that it is inevitable to put the problem of his historicity in doubt [152]). The position taken by

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145) Arrian, *Anabasis*, III, 27, 5.
146) For which see Gnoli, *Sīstān*, p. 59 ff.
147) *Ibid.*, p. 60.
148) Gnoli, *Sīstān*.
149) Thus Henning, *Zoroaster*, p. 42 ff.
150) See now also P. Daffinà, *RSO*, 43, 1968, p. 2.
151) Thus Henning, *Zoroaster*, p. 43.
152) In spite of what Duchesne-Guillemin says (RIA, p. 141).

Darmesteter—not the one of his *Ohrmazd et Ahriman* [153]), but the one of his *Zend-Avesta* [154])—about a Zoroaster, ancient high-priest of the Magi cast "soit historique, soit légendaire" [155]), or else the more recent position of Molé, who did not deny a priori the historicity of Zoroaster, but denied that there were sufficient elements handy to affirm it in a sure and determined manner [156]), these two positions should now deserve an extreme attention.

Now that the idea of a reformation has dropped; now that the value of a tradition that develops in different but not necessarily contrasting forms has been accepted; once the figure of Zoroaster has been collocated in a milieu, such as the south-eastern Iranian one, that has been kept for a very long time away from the culture and political constructions of the occidental Iranian monarchies, whether Median or Persian [157]); once the substantially unitary characteristic of Mazdeism as Iran's ethnic religion and its essentially sacerdotal and élite nature has been accepted; once the Greek sources have been examined that locate Zoroaster in an almost mythical age (6.000 years before Plato and 5.000 years before the Trojan war) and that are depicting him as a wise man, a thaumaturge, a psychagogue, the founder of the Magi sect, number one of the series of Ostanes, Astrampsychos, Gobryes, Pazates [158]); if we keep in mind the ritual and mythical meaning of the various forms that legend has assumed, which—as very wisely are telling us Darmesteter [159]) and Molé [160])—are based on the doctrine and the practice of the *haoma* sacrifice [161]); then necessarily we must abandon the common theory of the historicity at all costs. The thesis which asserts that Zoroaster is nothing but a name, a mythical and ritual figure, a symbol of a sacerdotal school, whose leaders were called, as we know, with the name of *zaraθuštrō. təma-* [161a]), this thesis may, to our opinion, open a perspective that

153) J. Darmesteter, *Ohrmazd et Ahriman*, Paris 1877.
154) Darmester, *Le Zend-Avesta*, III, Paris 1893.
155) *Ibid.*, p. LXXVII.
156) Molé, CMC, p. 531 ff.
157) There is no reference to them in the Avesta and, at the other hand, many elements that we are now analysing in a present research-work, induce us to make a clear distinction between the conception of kingship with the Achaemenians and the idea of power present in the Avesta.
158) Diogenes Laertius, *Proemium*, 1-2.
159) Darmesteter, *Le Zend-Avesta*, III, cit., p. LXXIX.
160) Molé, CMC, p. 533 and see above.
161) See further the quoted contribution at n. 104.
161a) "High priest", cf. Gershevitch, AHM, p. 265 ff.

might be really new and innovatory in the milieu of religious history not only for Iran, but for the whole of Near and Middle-Eastern history, from the beginning of the first millennium B.C. up to the affirmation and the spreading of the Gnosis [161b]).

Such a perspective promises other possibilities of development, if we give a new value to the ecstatic and magical aspect of Zoroastrian tradition and Iranian tradition in general, inside the frame of Persian religion; this being an aspect that Nyberg and the Swedish school have had the merit to study more thoroughly. On this too a new discussion was started recently, as we tried to reaffirm the characteristic of "active" trance that was typical for the Gāthic *maga*, in its concept of real "state" of being [162]). At the other hand, the researches that have been made in the other branch of the Aryan world are giving results that take an analogous direction: be it enough here to think of the fundamental researches of Gonda [162a]) about the Vedic theories and practices on mental vision and of the continuity of these magic and ecstatic motives in Indian tradition [163]). Thus everything converges in a single direction which is the very one that is leading us gradually to discover a dimension that is not devotional, but rather magical-religious inside the Iranian and Indian traditions. These new perspectives show—it seems to us—already for themselves, which way future researches should go, following to the results that have been reached already: the study of magic, ecstatic, mysteriosophic, gnostic, elements of Iranian religiosity, based on a new system of classification and definition: next to a religion for laymen, aiming at the satisfaction of immediate exigencies of life and to sustain the kingship, there exists a religion for priests, with a patrimonium of doctrine and rites, that served to improve the spiritual development of the endowed individual. Now, Iran puts us in front of three big religious trends or movements that may be ascribed to the former type: Zoroastrianism, Mithraism, and Manicheism; the first one between anthroposophy and mysteriosophy, the second one mysteric and the third gnostic. To consider the Mysteries of Mithra as an occidental fruit of an ancient Iranian popular religion that could not be documented, produced by Magi that had migrated to Asia Minor,

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161b) Widengren's contribution, that has appeared in *Origini della Gnosticismo* (*Colloquio di Messina*, 1966), Leiden 1967, is to be considered of utmost importance.

162) Gnoli, *AIUON*, N.S., 15, 1965, pp. 105-117.

162a) See above, n. 102.

163) Cf. Pensa, *op. cit.*, at n. 102.

rich in agrarian elements [164]), and in opposition to Zoroastrianism, means to settle the problem on basis that may in no way at all be proven by historical survey. And further it would not be good policy to take for granted the condemnation as "heresy" which the *mōbadān* were moving against the Manichaeans, and to consider Manichaeism as "heretical" and the religion of the *mōbad* that was serving the Persian crown as "orthodox" to the authentical Zoroastrian teaching and to Mazdeism in general [165]). If it is true—the way it is—that Iran has done much for Gnosis, then it must also be true that hierarchical and sacerdotal orthodoxy, of Kardēr and of Tōsar [166]) had gone astray from the original spirit of the ancient teaching of the Magi. The problem of continuity in Zoroastrian tradition and of the formation of Mithraic and Manichaean trends is exactly what, to our opinion, represents the new perspective of the historical studies on Persian religion.

ABBREVIATIONS

AAs	*Artibus Asiae*
AIUON	*Annali dell'Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli.*
ARW	*Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*
Bartholomae, *AirWb*	Chr. Bartholomae, *Altiranisches Wörterbuch*, Strassburg 1904.
Benveniste, PR	E. Benveniste, *The Persian Religion according to the Chief Greek Texts*, Paris 1929.
BSO(A)S	*Bulletin of the School of Oriental (and African) Studies*
DkM	*Dēnkart*, ed. D. M. Madan, Bombay 1911.
Duchesne-Guillemin, RIA	J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *La religion de l'Iran ancien*, Paris 1962.
Duchesne-Guillemin, *Zoroastre*	J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *Zoroastre. Étude critique avec une traduction commentée des Gâthâ*, Paris 1948.
Dumézil, NA	G. Dumézil, *Naissance d'Archanges*, Paris 1945.
Gershevitch, AHM	I. Gershevith, *The Avestan Hymn to Mithra*, Cambridge 1959.
Gnoli, *Sīstān*	Gh. Gnoli, *Ricerche storiche sul Sīstān antico*, Roma 1967.
Henning, *Zoroaster*	W. B. Henning, *Zoroaster. Politician or Witch-Doctor?*, Oxford 1951.
JA	*Journal Asiatique*
JNES	*Journal of Near-Eastern Studies*

164) This is Pettazzoni's thesis (*I Misteri. Saggio di una teoria storico-religiosa*, Bologna 1924, p. 269 ff.), that we have already discussed on January 21st, 1967, in a communication, entitled: "Considerazioni sui Misteri di Mithra" .

165) Gnoli, in *Le Origini dello Gnosticismo*, cit., pp. 281-290.

166) On Kardēr and Tōsar, see lately M. Boyce, *The Letter of Tansar*, Roma 1968, pp. 9-10.

JRAS	*The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*
Molé, CMC	M. Molé, *Culte, mythe et cosmologie dans l'Iran ancien*, Paris 1963.
Nyberg, RAI	H. S. Nyberg, *Die Religionen des alten Iran*, Leipzig 1938.
RHR	*Revue de l'histoire des religions.*
RSO	*Rivista degli Studi Orientali*
SMSR	*Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni.*
SWAW	*Sitzungsberichte der K. K. Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Wien.*
Widengren, *Hochgottglaube*	G. Widengren, *Hochgottglaube im alten Iran*, Uppsala 1938.
Widengren, RI	G. Widengren, *Die Religionen Irans*, Stuttgart 1965.
Widengren, *Stand und Aufgaben*	G .Widengren, *Stand und Aufgaben der iranischen Religionsgeschichte*, Leiden 1955.
XPh	*Xerxes, Persepolis h*: Xerxes' inscription at Persepolis.
Y.	*Yasna.*
Zaehner, DTZ	R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn and Twilight of Zoroastrianism*, London 1961.

DISCUSSION

BIANCHI. — I will only take up briefly a few of the many problems that should be examined.

First of all in my opinion too it is useful to keep the unity of the Mazdean phenomenon in consideration, and to avoid using too easily distinctions between "Zoroastrian" and "Mazdean", that are not yet justified enough, until both of these terms will be historically qualified; especially since the name of the god Mazda recurs in all of the Iranian religious documentation. I further agree with the evaluation of Zurvanism, and I appreciate the observations regarding the concept of *mageia* conceived as with an aim to promote cultually life, and the study of Iranian religion, so to say, *sub specie magorum.*

I also agree with the importance given to the fact that whereas from one side the god Mithra has been left out of the Gāthic literature, from the other side he has never been defined as a *daiva*, and this is of major importance for a critical evaluation of the common theory which connects the Mazdean concept of *daiva* with an antipolytheistic reform moved by Zarathustra.

But here is where I start being puzzled and making objections to the arguments of Prof. Gnoli's lecture. To start with, it would have been necessary to offer an explication whatever of the pejorative meaning of the word *daiva* in the Mazdean sources, which Prof. Gnoli omitted. It is not enough to recall a general Indo-Iranian trend to 'dualism' in

the realm of the gods. For this reason also I don't agree with Gnoli's drastic denial of the concept of a reform actioned by Zarathustra or by his milieu, or perhaps even by his predecessors. The importance of the VIth century B.C. has often been stressed; in the East as well as in the West this century is full of reformers, legendary or historical ones, but true reformers, at times on the level of a reformed religiosity of a mysteriosophic type, at times (and this would be the case with Zarathustra) on the level of a 'mental' religiosity opposite to certain forms of bloody ritualism; a reformed religiosity which reacts to certain forms of ancient fecundity cults, based on the bloody manipulation of the forces of life (cfr., in the East, the Upanishadic religiosity, on the background of the ritualism of the Brāhmana, and, in the West, the anti-orgiastic trend of Orphism and Heraclite's polemics against Dionysos and his cruel cathartic rites). Not that I herewith want to suppose that these 'reforms' have their source in a single historical movement; but a problem, both typological and historical, certain does exist. On the other hand, one could not forget that there is an impassable difference between the monistic mysticism of the Orphic and Upanishadic speculation and the Zoroastrian theism, which is undeniable in spite of any magistic interpretation of the Gāthās.

To pass to the Gāthic and Zoroastrian dualism, I continue to consider it absolutely incomprehensible and inadmissible that in the Gāthic thought Ahura Mazda should be interpreted by modern scholars as the source of both the Beneficent and the Destructive Spirits. I believe that Prof. Gnoli was hinting at an interpretation that would suggest the two Spirits to be an emanation, a derivation or polar manifestation of the same god. But in the Gāthās it is absurd to see any relation at all between Ahura Mazda and the Destructive Spirit, in any of the ways mentioned above.

And here I get to the essential point in which I disagree with Prof. Gnoli's interpretation. As far as the non-concrete, the non-*gētīk* character of the Ahrimanic manifestations are concerned, which Gnoli affirms basing himself on a well known Pahlavi text, I could not admit that this doctrine should control the general interpretation of Iranian dualism the way Prof. Gnoli proposes it. First of all, nobody could deny that in very ancient periods of the Iranian tradition, some concrete and material beings were considered as Ahrimanic, such as reptiles, insects etc. (the *xrafstar*) and it was considered the *magi*'s great merit to kill these beings: beings that, in the dual conception of *mēnōk* and *gētīk*, certainly did belong to the *gētīk*. The non-*gētīk* character of

Ahriman ("who has no material being", Dd. XVIII, 2 [p. 41]; Shaked infra cit., p. 228) certainly is present in Pahlavi literature (cfr. DkM. 98-100), and this could at least partly correspond to later theories more or less akin to Prof. Gnoli's interpretation of *gētīk* itself: but here again we must keep in mind a famous Zoroastrian catechism: "I came from the *mēnōk*, I did not receive an existence from the *gētīk*. I belong to Ohrmazd and not to Ahriman, to the angels and not to the demons, to the good ones and not to the bad" (*Pandnāmak i Zardušt*, 3). True, this too may be a later conceptual development, perhaps even influenced by alien concepts; but it could have hardly imposed itself at all, had Gnoli's interpretation, based on some Pahlavi texts, been the only authentic or prevailing one of Mazdean dualism. To put it clearly: it is not a question of denying the "negative essence", or even the "non-existence" of Ahriman (cfr. also S. Shaked's paper in *Studies ... presented to G. G. Scholem*, pp. 227-234); what must concern us here is to *interpret* this "negativity". In our opinion, the negative essence of Ahriman implies that Ahriman's essence and action are to menace and to mortify, by an incursion from outside, the good creation which Ohrmazd had conceived and then made "real" (i.e., transferred to the *gētīk*). This Ahrimanian assault takes place by means of beings intended at "countering" the good creation of Ohrmazd; and it is important that this countering and mortifying activity of the Ahrimanian beings is and continues to be the point of reference of all the doctrine. Now, if the *gētīk* is *strictly* intended (as it *can* be) in the context of the dynamic of the transferring by Ohrmazd of the mental creation to the state of concrete, "real" creation (creation in the state of *gētīk*), then it is clear that in this final state of creation there is no room for Ahrimanian beings any more than in the previous, mental (*mēnōk*) state. True, there is not (as Shaked remarks) a perfect symmetry between the Ohrmazd's and Ahriman's attitudes regarding creation: this lack of symmetry explains the anomaly of an Ahriman who is creator but "has no material being": this because, as we remarked above, it is Ohrmazd's (material) creation which is the point of reference of all of the interest, and this (Ohrmazdian *material*) creation is the target of all Ahrimanian 'negative', but very concretely and materially effective activity. At any rate, it could not be denied that Ahriman too, in the Mazdean doctrine, *is* 'creator' (G. Bd., p. 11).

This means that *gētīk* can also be considered in conceptual contexts other than that to which the non-*gētīk* (and the 'non-existent'!) essence of Ahriman is committed. This could happen, for instance, in a

context like that of the above quoted Mazdean profession of faith, or, more frequently, in the context of the doctrine of the *xrafstar*, Ahriman's noxious creatures, which the Magi and the pious ones are to destroy in this world. Last but not least, it is not to be neglected that in the above mentioned text *it is Ahriman* who has no *gētīk* or no material being, and *not the beings* pertaining to his creation, whose *gētīk* essence was nowhere denied in the Pahlavi texts. Further, a text from the Dēnkart, where it says (DkM 530 f., Shaked p. 230) that "Ahreman's habitation in the world is in the bodies of men. Therefore, when there is no habitation for him in the bodies of men, he is annihilated from the whole world", should be explained by the fact that it is taken from a "moralistic part of the Dēnkart" (Shaked, l.c.), and that therefore it cannot make the cosmological doctrine of the *xrafstar* be ignored. Nor may it support Shaked's assumption "that such expressions as 'the material form of the demons' (Mēnōk-i xrat, 57, 12)" refer "to an external material form into which the demons penetrate". It is not to be neglected that man is considered, in Mazdean doctrine, as the center of all interest and of all "history of creation and salvation", but that other beings too, both Ohrmazdian and Ahrimanian, do exist as well in the *gētīk* as in the *mēnōk*.

Another point: the typical ethical effort of Zoroastrianism should absolutely not been put in second line at all, the way Gnoli does. As I said, I think it right to stress the 'magic' moment of Zoroastrianism, whatever the word 'magic' may mean here. But it is also true that in all of the Avestan literature, starting with the Gāthās, or even with the Achemenian inscriptions, the 'Truth' has first of all an ethic reference, even if in the royal inscriptions it qualifies as "loyalty towards the sovereign" and the order which he represents: which is something that is further strengthening the ethical reference of the concept.

And a final observation, this time a more general historical-religious one, referring to how to interpret the facts which History of Religions is presenting to us. The way Prof. Gnoli sees it, Zarathustra's personality and historicity are overwhelmed by what he considers as a general trend of the Iranic *koinè*. Although I do agree with the reasons for this *koinè*, as I already said at the beginning of this intervention, I believe it is wrong to drop into the opposite pole, and to deny or declare oneself agnostic about the personality of a Zarathustra and about the autobiographic references in the Gāthās, and this for the sake of a Zarathustra *magos* (the way the Greeks were talking of him)

not less legendary, at any rate, than the Gāthic one; anyway, leaving the question about the historicity of this figure out of consideration, I would not appreciate abandoning the standards of interpretation that the Gāthās offer, to substitute them with those of a kind of 'Greek-Pythagoric' 'magistic' interpretation of Zarathustra (and here in a gnostic-cultual sense, as Prof. Gnoli affirmed it). And finally, as far as the 6,000 years are concerned, that is—according to Prof. Gnoli—one of the elements that locate 'Zarathustra', as he says, in the historical frame of an 'ethnical' religion rather than of a 'founded' one, I here recall that this aberrating or mythical number used by some Greek sources to value the distance of Zoroaster from Plato, has been well explained as the reflex of a mythical biography and cosmology that are locating Zoroaster at the beginning of a cosmical era of which Plato should be the completion; and this with reference to the well-known Mazdean theory of the millenniums.

GNOLI. — Notwithstanding Prof. Bianchi's objections to my viewpoint, I still believe that there is no sufficient element, among the ones we dispose of, to support the idea of a reform or a revolution consciously operated by a precise historical person, living in the sixth century B.C. It is obvious that the synchronism that keeps up the well-known theory of the axial period could not be of any help here. Furthermore, recent studies on Indian religion, from G. Gonda to C. Pensa, are tending to stress more the continuity of Indian tradition, than they do with the artificial splittings that a certain type of historical research has frequently been supposing. As far as the remark about the idea of polarity of the two *mainyu* is concerned, perhaps I explained myself wrong: I was mentioning there the opinions of some modern Parsees, as results in my footnote n. 1 where I refer to J. M. Unvala. The interpretation that I was proposing about the Iranian dualistic concept, derives from the complete analysis of the various data we dispose of, and precisely: a) the creation of Ahura Mazdā is contaminated by the Ahrimanian assault; b) in the Pahlavī texts' cosmology, Ahriman does not create on the *gētīg* level; the *gētīg* creation is proper only to Ohrmazd. The fact that some noxious animals, reptiles, insects etc., were considered Ahrimanian creatures, should not lead us to suppose that in Mazdean cosmogony and cosmology there was room for a real and proper creation by Ahriman on a *gētīg* level. On the other hand, the 1st chapter of the *Vendīdād* shows perfectly well how the Ahrimanian counter-creation is void of any consistency with respect to Ahura Mazdā's; it is evidently but a consequence of Aŋra Mainyu's

assault against Ahura Mazdā's thoroughly concrete and visible creation. And as far as *arta/aša*, is concerned, I stressed on purpose those values that did not refer to ethics, not because I believe there are no such ethical values in the Iranian notion, but because they have been so often exaggerated that they have succeeded to darken the cosmic and ritualistic values that are equally present and important, and to which Molé has dedicated a very appropriate attention (*Culte, mythe et cosmologie* ..., p. 207 ff.). Where the problem of Zoroaster is concerned, there too my position is analogous to Molé's (*ibid.*, p. 531 ff.; cf. my review in *RSO*, XL, 1965, p. 338 and p. 341): the conception of the Zoroaster's figure is not historical and, basing ourselves on the documentation we dispose of, we cannot locate this figure in time, as it is rooted in a reality of a ritualistic kind. The tendency towards rendering the prophet historical in the Mazdean tradition, very likely prevailed in a late epoch, probably codified in the Sassanian epoch and reinforced by a spirit of competition with other founded religions. I myself cannot see how the thesis of Zoroaster's historicity may be supported by that famous Greek tradition, that goes back to Eudoxus of Cnidus, who makes Zoroaster live 5.000 years before the Trojan war or 6.000 years before Plato. The explanation of this chronology given by Jackson (*Zoroaster the Prophet of Ancient Iran*, Appendix II) does not solve the problem of historicity at all; nothing allows us to believe, indeed, that a historical date hides behind a mythical one, while it is rather probable that the historical date be posterior to the mythical one; this is also proven by the very fact that the but apparently historical date (notwithstanding Henning's opinion, *Zoroaster*, p. 38 ff.), that locates Zoroaster 258 years before Alexander, certainly goes back to the beginning of the Sassanian epoch. But I will come back to this argument in a work of mine on Sassanian religious politics, that I will present at the International Meeting on the theme "Persia in the Middle Ages", (Rome, March 31 to April 5, 1970) organized by the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei. And to conclude with, if actual documentation on hand destroys those presuppositions on which the traditional idea of a reform and a conscious revolution were based, that would have thoroughly transformed the ancient Aryan religion in Iran, then also the intrinsic necessity of seeing in Zoroaster the figure of a historical prophet and a religious and ethical reformer must, as such, necessarily drop.

Bolgiani. — In his interpretation of Mazdean dualism the lecturer has said that the very limitation of the being itself creates a counterpart,

a negative being. Was this affirmation made according to more ancient texts, or only due to a valorization of the texts of the Middle-Iranian theology?

GNOLI. — Certainly it is an interpretation of mine which, to my opinion, is logically dictated by the examination of the information we dispose of. As a matter of fact the absolute symmetry of the so-called dualistic Iranian formula and the already mentioned doctrine of a non-existence on a *gētīg* level of an Ahrimanian creation are two elements which, together, suggest, or even impose the interpretation I have proposed. The Ahrimanian creation does not exist in itself and for itself, it has not life of its own; it is merely the negative counterpart of everything that exists. This is why Ahriman could not create on the *gētīg* level of existence, and why he is not eternal nor endless, as Ohrmazd is (cf. *GrBd.*, ed. Anklesaria, p. 3; see Zaehner, *Zurvan. A Zoroastrian Dilemma*, Oxford 1955, pp. 278, 279; Il. DTZ, p. 216). The Ahrimanian creation is confined to the *mēnōg* status; it cannot be transferred into the *gētīg* as with Ohrmazd's creation: the Ahrimanian creation is merely ideal, mental, embryonal, not manifest. And for a clear understanding of the *mēnōg* conception in the Pahlavī texts I refer to the observations already made in *AIUON*, N.S., XIII, 1963, p. 180 ff.

GIUFFRÈ. — About the eminently ontological, magic and cosmic character of Mazdean dualism, which, according to prof. Gnoli, expresses itself as a symmetrical polarity, as the negativity of Ahriman's creation seen as a world of shadows that belong to the *mēnōk*,—a fact that limitates the creation—: I wish to ask Prof. Gnoli how he explains the mythical theme presented by a few Armenian (Eznik), and Manichean texts and by the Acts of Persian martyrs (texts that are going from the Vth to the IX-Xth cent. A.D.), where it is said that Ahriman gives, though unwillingly, an indispensable contribution to the creation of light (through the creation of sun and moon), i.e. to the creation of the element, considered—par excellence—as positive by the entire Mazdean tradition. I wonder whether a more voluntaristic and less ontological concept of this polarity of good and evil could not have preceded, as it is supported by the Gāthic Y. 30 as well, where the 'choice' made by the two "spirits" is mentioned. And further, in the above mentioned mythological tradition, referred by Eznik, Ahriman declares to do evil willingly; and to prove his capacity to create beautiful things he creates the peacock.

GNOLI. — To the first part of the question I could answer this:

the same as light could not exist without darkness, thus Ahriman is strictly bound to the creation of light by Ohrmazd. Of course the very language of myth must serve to identify the precise functions of Ahriman and the various phases of the episode just recalled, but I believe that there must be no doubt that the meaning of it must serve to confirm the interpretation of dualism that I had made: the two poles are complementary. To the second part of the question, where the voluntaristic aspect of the Ahrimanian choice is concerned, we must observe that it makes no sense to talk of Aŋra Mainyu and of Spənta Mainyu as if they were subjects, independent of the choice they have made: they are Aŋra and Spənta precisely due to the choice they made. The two adjectives rather express the result of this choice and one could say that both their choice and their essence form only one whole (on this matter see above and cf. Gershevitch, quoted at n. 72). The *daēvas* are not wicked by themselves, but only because they have chosen *ačišta manah* (Y. XXX, 6). Furthermore, we must distinguish between "beings" or "personifications" of certain latent possibilities of man, such as the *daēvas* and Aŋra Mainyu, and notions, principles, such as the *drug*. In other words, the two opposed poles are the *drug* and the *aša*. Further to an act of will that is not posterior to their nature, but is their very essence itself, Aŋra Mainyu and Spənta Mainyu represent the two directions that the *mainyu* may take. But in this context we should examine more closely this last notion; and this would take us too far astray.

GASPARRO. — I feel that your lecture tries a lot to recuperate Manicheism in Iranian tradition, which is something that is effectively acceptable under many an aspect. But, also referring to Dēnkart's polemics against the Manicheans, who admit that the *Druj* finds shelter in the human body, I feel that it is precisely here that we may notice that qualitative jump between the Mazdean religion (even in the line of development which you consider most coherent) and Manicheism itself. And according to Manicheism, even the presence of the *nous*— that divine element— inside the body stresses the negativity of the latter, for Manicheism considers salvation precisely as a setting free of the *nous* from the body and a separation of the elements, this way stressing the qualitative jump with respect to the Mazdean religion (which admits of an entirely positive creation, completely made by Ohrmazd).

GNOLI. — No doubt, the actually more common opinion considers that there is an enormous difference between the Mazdean dualism

and the more general Manichean and gnostic dualism (cf. for example J. P. de Menasce, *Une apologétique mazdéenne du IXe siècle, Škand-gumānīk vičār*, Fribourg en Suisse, 1945, p. 227 ff.), but I believe that the whole question should be re-examined, as I have already hinted at, in the study mentioned on n. 165. Personally I am convinced that such an enormous difference between the said dualistic conceptions is only the fruit of an inexact interpretation of the sources.

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SOME INTERNAL AND COMPARATIVE PROBLEMS IN THE FIELD OF INDIAN RELIGIONS

1. *Foreword*

Uncertainty and heterogenity in methodological approach are, we believe, causing some misunderstanding, difficulties and problems in the study of Indian religions.

The general characteristics of this heterogenity are too well known for us to comment upon them here. Be it enough then to evoke that oscillation, that is typical for Indology, between the philological viewpoint that has only an analytical and descriptive treatment of the religious phenomena for its scope, and a generic philosophical comparatism which neglects every specific religious substance of so many Indian religions, and which at times is not reluctant to pass value judgments of one kind or the other.

And this to say nothing about a frequent mystic prejudice which is responsible for a diffused acritical spirit towards Indian spirituality that seems to grant it some kind of universal primacy.

Now, we believe that this disorder, and this disparity in the methodological field may be overcome in one way only: by having historical-comparative reflection as well as phenomenological reflection penetrate ever more into the study of Indian religions; in this way we would stop considering the Indian religious world as a very important yet independent and separate phenomenon.

We must add that the philological element should come first, without of course turning into philologism [1]).

In our opinion, particular reasons make this a necessity for India—first of all the enormous amount of unpublished or untranslated material. Furthermore, it happens more than once that for a single document only one translation is available, and at times even specific studies are lacking. This puts the non-specialist in a difficult situation, since he will not have the opportunity of making a sufficient number of comparisons to make up for his lack of linguistic knowledge.

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[1]) For "philological alienation" cf. M. Eliade's beautiful pages in "Crisis and Renewal in History of Religions", *History of Religions* (= HR), V (1965), pp. 1-17, republished in the volume *The Quest*, Chicago 1969, pp. 54-71.

On the other hand, only to a certain extent does it seem desirable to solve this difficult problem by dividing the job between philologists, exclusively in charge of editing and translating, and interpreters, who would coordinate, compare and interpret the data that technical research supplied them with and further integrate them in a larger context. As a matter of fact we cannot see how really valuable and well-founded results can be reached without a reciprocal interaction of both activities, the specialist and the interpretative.

2. *On the Indian "gnosis"*

Having said this, we shall now try to make out which sectors of the Indian religions might be most suitable for a large scale comparative and typological examination. We feel justified in saying that up to the present one of the relatively pronounced tendencies is to compare a few currents, more especially representative of the Indian religious world, with occidental gnosis; the latter to be understood in the more restricted historical meaning of gnosticism as well as in a more generally typological sense. We may file the studies on this topic, under a few categories: (a) historical approaches that consider the possibility of an Indian origin,—over and above the Iranic one,—for some aspects of gnostic speculation, or about the Indo-Iranic background of gnosis; especially in the works of G. Widengren [2]) and U. Bianchi [3]); (b) research work—see G. Tucci's research [4])—aimed at stressing possible specifically historic influences of gnosticism in India; (c) observations on typological affinities between the two parts, such as those made by E. Conze and M. Eliade [5]). Now, it seems to us that these three kinds of more or less mutually involved researches

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2) Cf. above all G. Widengren, "Der iranische Hintergrund der Gnosis", *Zeitschrift für Religions und Geistesgeschichte*, IV, 1952, pp. 97-116, and U. Bianchi, "Les origines du gnosticisme et l'histoire des religions" in *Le Origini dello Gnosticismo*, Leiden 1967, pp. 28-60.

3) Cf. also, for a general historical-religious survey of gnosis, U. Bianchi, "Le problème des origines du gnosticisme et l'histoire des religions", *Numen*, XII, 1965, pp. 161-178; "Initiation, mystère, gnose", in *Initiation*, Leiden 1965, pp. 154-171; "Le problème des origines du gnosticisme", in *Le Origini* etc., *cit.*, pp. 1-27; "Perspectives de la recherche sur les origines de gnosticisme", *ibid.*, pp. 716-746; "Basilide, o del tragico", *Studi e Materiali di Storia delle Religioni*, XXXVIII, 1967, pp. 78-85.

4) Cf. G. Tucci, "Some Glosses upon Guhyasamāja", *Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques*, III, Bruxelles, 1935, pp. 339-353; "Animadversiones Indicae", in Jñānamuktāvalī, New Delhi 1963, pp. 221-227.

5) Cf. E. Conze, "Buddhism and Gnosis", in *Le Origini*, *cit.* pp. 651-667; M. Eliade, *Myth and Reality*, ital. transl., *Mito e Realtà*, Torino 1966, pp. 164-166, for a comparison between Sāṃkhya and Gnosticism.

on the relation gnosis-India, are of particular interest. After all they do as a matter of fact try to ascertain the common presuppositions of an important set of Indian doctrines (Upaniṣads, Sāṃkhya-Yoga, Buddhism, Tantrism) on one hand, and on the other a certainly not negligible current of late ancient occidental speculation that seems to awake an increasing interest in the field of historical-religious studies; and these researches as such give some hope of solving to a certain extent the typology in history, and vice versa, as was R. Pettazzoni's wish [6]). This is why we believe that there are good reasons for considering this theme as a true switching point to a study of Indian religions in a synthetical-comparative context.

Here the first thing to be ascertained—of course with inevitable approximation—is *what*, in India, gives way in a confrontation with gnostic trends or else, more generally, in which aspects of Indian religiousness it is possible to individualize a gnostic structure.

The answer to this question in the above mentioned researches on this topic, and suggested implicitly in more general treatises on Indian philosophy and religion, is as follows: notably the Upaniṣads, Yoga, Sāṃkhya, Buddhism in many respects, and Tantrism [7]): i.e., in these doctrines some of gnosis' major peculiarities may be found, starting from the soteriological value of knowledge and the central location of the human soul (or man, anyway) in the cosmos.

However, if we consider some recent and also less recent studies, and if we concentrate our attention on ancient India's religious literature, the question arises whether it is right to limit comparison with gnosis to the above-mentioned doctrines. Around the 1920s F. Edgerton was already stressing the erroneousness of considering the upaniṣadic speculation as something substantially different from the more ancient vedic religiousness. He observes that "this interpretation involves a radical misunderstanding of the point of view of those texts, and indeed of all classical Indian philosophy" [8]) and concludes that "every idea contained in at least the older Upaniṣads, with almost no exceptions is not new to the Upaniṣads, but can be found set forth or at

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[6]) R. Pettazzoni, "Il metodo comparativo", *Numen*, VI, 1959, pp. 1-14.

[7]) Unfortunately the term "Tantrism" is generic and improper, as some scholars have rightly noticed. For a discussion of this argument, cf. J. Naudou's recent work, *Les Bouddhistes Kaśmiriens au Moyen Age*, Paris 1968, pp. 109 ff., in particular p. 112.

[8]) F. Edgerton, "The Upaniṣads: What do They Seek and Why?", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 49 (1920), p. 101.

least very clearly foreshadowed in the older Vedic texts" [9]). The same Author specifically mentions the Atharva Veda as being closely akin to Upaniṣads and declares that "all Vedic philosophy may (from our point of view) be described as a sort of philosophic magic, or magical philosophy" [10]). We shall come back on this later. Right now we are only interested in noting the important affirmation of *continuity* in Indian speculation that rises from F. Edgerton's research.

In the same way, the valuable studies of M. Falk [11])—unfortunately known less than their merit deserves—come to analogous general conclusions about this continuity. But as we shall see later on, his argumentation is in part different from Edgerton's: as a matter of fact the kern of Falk's interpretation is not the "magical philosophy", but rather the mythical-mystical attitude, based on the analogy between microcosm and macrocosm: ever since ancient Vedism there has been a "psychological" doctrine present in Indian tradition, i.e. an anthroposophic, soteric value, at times explicit, and at times implicit in myth. Such a psychical implication is in strictly interdependent connection with cosmogony and cosmology; and frequently it is the cosmology that has its foundation in "psychology" and not vice-versa.

Still as far as continuity in Indian tradition is concerned, we consider J. C. Heesterman's works important, especially where he proves that the brahmin, at least in his ideal form, *is not* the diametrical opposite of the figure of the renouncer (*sannyāsin*), as common notions on the subject suggest. On the contrary, "the true brahmin *is* the renouncer or the individualized sacrificer" [12]).

It is unnecessary to say how fundamental [13]) for the question of continuity, are J. Gonda's general treatment of the problem, and the

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9) Id., "Sources of the Philosophy of the Upaniṣads", *ibid.* 36 (1917), p. 197. From the same Author see also for this subject "The Philosophic Materials of the Atharva Veda", *Studies in Honour of M. Bloomfield*, New Haven 1920, pp. 117-135 and *The Beginnings of Indian Philosophy*, London 1965, Introduction, pp. 17-34. Edgerton's thesis about the continuity Veda-Upaniṣads has been recently taken up again by Hoàng-son Hoàng-sy Quý, "Les Upaniṣad sont-elles une interprétation de données mystiques?", *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, 174 (1968), pp. 27-37, to assert —against Zaehner—the priority of the mythical element with regard to the mystic one, in the Upaniṣads.

10) Edgerton, "The Upaniṣads...", *cit.*, pp. 107-108.

11) M. Falk, *Il Mito psicologico dell'India antica*, Roma 1939 and *Nāma-rūpa and Dharma-Rūpa*, Calcutta 1943.

12) J. C. Heesterman, "Brahmin, Ritual and Renouncer", *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd- und Ostasiens*, 8 (1964), p. 28.

13) See especially J. Gonda, *The Vision of Vedic Poets*, The Hague 1963, and *Change and Continuity in Indian Religion*, The Hague 1965.

light he sheds on the eminently psychical and interior value of the *dhīḥ* or vedic "vision". As a result of his conclusions, the latter can no longer be seen as a strictly ritualistic happening, nor can it be restricted to the level of "secular" poetry.

Finally, we ourselves have tried to demonstrate how often—in various Indian traditions—operative interdependence of purification, knowledge and power recurs [14]). And basing ourselves on this, we have noticed, among other things, a structural parallelism between the sacrifice of the *soma* and the later practice of the yogic *samādhi.*

Now the principal conclusion that emerges from these various studies that we have been mentioning (as well as others), is that it is impossible to conceive—the way Indology has been doing for a long time—a deep fracture between Vedism and post-Vedism, due to non-Aryan and pre-Aryan influences. Of course—as it has been well stressed,—to state a continuity does not mean to postulate a static tradition out of history [15]).

It is obvious that all this is not empty of consequences on the comparative level.

As a matter of fact whenever studies can further support and deepen the above given concepts, this will make it possible to push back to a yet more ancient period the existence of a pre-eminently "gnostic" (or pre-gnostic) structure, centered on a soteriological knowledge that was at first essentially mythical-ritual, and later, from the Upaniṣads on, got progressively more complex, i.e. mythical-mystical-ritual. And here, before the problem of going back in time, the question arises, what possibility there may be of placing the more ancient typological gnostic, or, if we wish, pre-gnostic elements, in a historical-phenomenological series as has been proposed for the classical Occident [16]): a) agrarian fertility rites; b) mysteries; c) mysteriosophy and finally d) gnosis proper. No doubt, the equivalence mysteriosophy-Upaniṣads, thanks to these phenomena being more or less contemporary (VI°-V° cent. b.C.) may prove plausible; gnosis proper should then be placed with later movements, i.e. Mahāyāna Buddhism and Tantrism, while in a strict sense Veda could be considered a parallel with the classical mysteries

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[14]) C. Pensa, "Interdipendenza di purificazione, conoscenza e potere nello Yoga in rapporto alla continuità della tradizione indiana", *Annali dell'Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli*, N.S. XIX (1969), pp. 217-260, and "On the Purification Concept in Indian Tradition with Special Regard to Yoga", *East and West*, N.S. XIX (1969), pp. 194-228.

[15]) Cf. J. Gonda, *Change*, *cit.*, p. 17.

[16]) Bianchi, *Initiation*, *cit.*, pp. 154-155.

in their initial phase, or to the movement that preceeded them. In favour of this last equation—very problematic indeed—there are a few very general elements such as, for example, the fusion in the Veda as well as in the mysteries, of the collective-naturistic element with the individual-initiatory one. But over and above these specific problems that the comparison of this quadruple series with the Indian world has called up, we are especially interested in a more general question, i.e. what correspondence may be found in India for that progressive darkening of the horizon, so to speak, that is evidenced in the above mentioned succession. Here there would be a gradual passing from an initial naturistic-harmonistic attitude where the human soul is not yet violently opposed to the world, to a final anti-cosmic and anti-somatic position, and as such dualistic and pessimistic, which is peculiar to gnosis [17]).

3. *Pessimism, dualism and anticosmism. Ambivalence and bipolarity*

From the comparative point of view the question of anticosmism is of major importance due to the fact that such an attitude is frequently ascribed to a great part of Indian religious-philosophical speculation and that at times it is this topic that serves to individualize the affinity between India and the West [18]).

Now we take for granted that the most considerable point of contact between gnostic thought and the Indian world is represented by the soteriological conception of knowledge and by the conception of the centrality of the human soul. On the other hand as far as the so-called Indian dualism-pessimism is concerned, it seems to us that the complexity of the problem renders inadequate any use of such dogmatic formulas that, loaded with suggestions that are strange to the argument, would be sure to lead us astray. And perhaps even more, since they are diametrically opposed to the explicit non-dualist position of several Indian traditions.

Usually the doctrine of transmigration is taken as evident proof of Indian pessimism, and only very rarely does one read clear-cut denials of this interpretation, such as the one L. Dumont makes when he writes: "Rather than a pessimistic view, transmigration would appear as a bold design lending to the man-in-the-world some reality taken

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17) Cfr. generally, *Le Origini, cit.*; in particular, in this volume, cf. H. Jonas, "Delimitation of the gnostic phenomenon — typological and historical", pp. 90-108 and cf. Bianchi, *opp. cit.* in fn. 3.

18) Cf. for ex. R. C. Zaehner, *At Sundry Times*, London 1958, p. 175 and *passim*.

from that which the renouncer has found for himself" [19]); or else "for him (i.e. the Buddha) there was neither morality nor human liberty without retributive transmigration: this shows that transmigration is not pessimism but the necessary condition of the individual's existence" [20]). But nevertheless we all know that current opinions about the Indian *Weltanschauung* remain of a completely different tenor. For instance, let us take P. Teilhard de Chardin: "Les phénomènes regardés comme une illusion (*māyā*) et leurs liaisons comme une chaine (*karma*), que restait-il a ces doctrines pour animer et diriger l'évolution humaine? Simple erreur commise—mais c'était tout!—dans la définition de l'Esprit et dans l'appréciation des liens qui rattachent celui-ci aux sublimations de la Matière" [21]). Actually, as we shall see later, the more you adhere to *brahman*, the more the fundamental power-knowledge will incarnate and the more then will we be able "to animate and direct human evolution"; and we shall also see how the Spirit does—in India—put itself frequently at the end of a long progressive series of sublimations of matter.

To consider this question more closely, let us take a more precise formulation of the so-called pessimism: the thesis which asserts that in India history is void of sense and cosmos and nature serve only to emprison the soul. If we consider the Indian religious world in all its extent over the various historical epochs, it is no doubt easy to find some accents of simple-minded pessimism and somehow anti-cosmic tonalities, as they are the direct product of those extreme forms of asceticism condemned by the very Buddha himself.

And yet, on the whole, the religious-philosophical literature does not allow for conclusions of such a negative type: it rather builds a set of complex formulations where negative and positive both have their place, as we shall see. It is likely that it is the very difficulty itself of penetrating the complexity of such teachings that will have given rise to an unwarrantable simplification of the problem in the more narrow-minded trends of asceticism. Of course from the historian's point of view this simplification, although it has taken place several times and has even had very important repercussions, should not be allowed to throw into the shadow all those complex elements which

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19) L. Dumont, "World Renunciation in Indian Religions", *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, IV (1960), p. 49.

20) *Ibid.*, p. 50.

21) P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Le Phénomène humain*, Paris 1955, p. 234.

Indian speculative tradition has constantly stressed as of primary importance.

And when we listen to some of the major learned traditions, beginning with Sāṃkhya-Yoga and the Upaniṣads, we may get to a positive conclusion as far as the cosmos is concerned, and on the end even where history is concerned. As a matter of fact cosmos and history, though it may appear contradictory to us, in addition to the creative function, are endowed with an evolutive one, i.e. to make man want to transcend conditioning, not to attain a nihil or an enlightened dissolution very close to nihil, but rather to reintegrate in the *puruṣa* or in the *brahman*. It is important to notice that *prakṛti* or nature, far from being considered as something devilish, is invested with a double finality: not only the creative one but also the freeing one [22]). The symbol of Buddha being born of a mother called Māyā is not accidental: the creative power creates enlightenment as well.

Thus in Sāṃkhya-Yoga the liberation of the *puruṣa* is put as the most important end of the *prakṛti*; if on the one hand the latter emprisons, it also stimulates to liberation.

The same concept returns frequently in the Upaniṣads although with a different terminology. Think of the double aspect of the upaniṣadic *brahman* [23]): as a superior element it means wisdom (*vidyā*), cosmic order (*ṛta*), truth (*satyam*); as an inferior it is nescience (*avidyā*), the manifestation of the creative power and the darkening of order due to the delimitation produced by the finite forms (*nāmarūpa*). As a symbol, when the cosmic pillar (*skambha*) is turned down we have the cosmogonic function, when it is turned up we have the soteric function. It must be considered that the pillar is the *same one* in both cases. In Sāṃkhya-Yoga the cosmogonic energetical aspect of the *brahman* is represented by the *prakṛti*, the enlightened-soteric one by the *puruṣa*, or better still by the sum of the *puruṣas*. If we now return to the question of the meaning of cosmos and history, we hold that *brahman-prakṛti* drives towards the *brahman-puruṣa*. Now, the identification of self with the supreme *brahman* means coessentiality with the universal virtuality of unexpressed power (*aniruktam*), i.e. with the *Urgrund*, with the power-knowledge in its more complete form. And so the man-*brahman*, i.e. the conscient creator-man, will be integrated in the *brahman*, as a support of the

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22) Cf. for ex. *Sāṃkhya-Kārikās*, 21, 31, 42, 56, 57, 63, *Yogasūtras*, 11, 18; IV 24.
23) For references and discussion see Falk, *Nāma-rūpa. cit.*, pp. 30, 31, 48.

manifested world; he will disappear from history *as its effect*; but shall transfer into history *as its cause*, as he will not act any further for the sake of his illusory personal finalities but for that of *ātman-brahman*. Here it may, to a certain extent, be objected, that at least for Sāṃkhya-Yoga, nature is represented as a blind force, while the soul is defined as an intelligent nucleus outside of nature. But as we know, as a matter of fact even the Sāṃkhya was not able to keep up such a dichotomy and was forced to admit a sympathy between the two terms, when it inserted in *prakṛti*—this being in evident contrast with his initial dualistic assumption—the more particular element of the *puruṣa*, or intelligence. As a matter of fact, the *prakṛti* has finalities —and thus could not be blind. Therefore Sāṃkhya-Yoga may be defined as a radical dualism in intention, but in fact it is something completely different: in fact we find back in it, the two-faced *brahman* of the Upaniṣads.

We must further add that, as the historical-philological approach has well demonstrated [24]), there is no reason at all to consider the classical doctrine of the *Sāṃkhya-Kārikās* as the complete and the perfect one: this would imply an evolutionist *a priori*. Therefore it will be natural to grant full legitimacy—and thus not a secondary value—to the Sāṃkhya schemes that are to be found in the epic poetry and in the Purāṇas. For instance, in the latter ones it is clearly affirmed that the process of evolution of the *prakṛti* is, in fact, guided by the *puruṣa* (*puruṣādhiṣṭhita* [25]). What was implicit in the *Sāṃkhya-kārikās*, is here explicitly declared. This is why, to our opinion, M. Biardeau's observation seems appropriate even for the classical Sāṃkhya: "On s'aperçoit qu'un schéma dualiste serait aussi trompeur qu'un schéma moniste: les deux entités sont très exactement complémentaires, au moins dans une perspective cosmogonique, et ne peuvent être pensées l'une sans l'autre" [26]).

Thus we have a concept of history that is different from the one of some modern occidental trends, but not negativistic; for history is not seen as the reign of liberty opposed to nature as the reign of necessity, as it is in the conception proper to historicism. Actually, according

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[24]) Cf. J. A. B. van Buitenen, "Studies in Sāṃkhya (II)", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 77 (1957), p. 15 and ff., for references also.

[25]) See, for this argument, M. Biardeau's important studies, "Études de mythologie hindoue", I and II, *Bulletin de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient*, 54 (1968), pp. 19-45, especially pp. 25-27 and 31, and *ibid.* 55 (1969), pp. 59-105.

[26]) Id., *op. cit.*, I, p. 25.

to the Indian conception, man starts "making history" actively only when he manages to catch the evolutive-ascendent current inherent in nature, that is thus seen as an animated *quid*, strictly of the same kind as the individual whom it helps, for *prakṛti* has the freeing of the *puruṣa* for its ultimate end. But when man, thanks to the push that is both free and natural, realizes the identity, so to speak, of his own entelechy with the universal one, from that moment on he is able actively to "make history"; from the very moment, that is, when he transfers to a level that we call trans-historical and elusive while to the Indian conception it is only *brahman*'s other face, the conscient-causal one [27]).

Of course, all this does not allow us to ascribe to the yogin—as Eliade does (although he has accurately described the positive function of the *prakṛti*) [28]) an intention to suspend the cosmic laws, and to "make the Universe cease" [29]).

To understand these ideological units well, we rather need the categories of *ambivalence* and *bipolarity* in a unitarian context. But certainly not the dualism-anti-cosmism that does not seem to find much foundation from what has been said until now. An ambivalence that will sound in various tonalities in all of the Indian tradition. Think of the divine energy in a microcosmic aspect, the *kuṇḍalini*, "that binds the foolish and frees the one who knows", or, still in the Tantra, the conception of the world as a reason both for the fall and the freeing [30]).

And we must further remember a no less pregnant and magnificent pan-Indian symbol of the fundamentally ambivalent character of cosmos and life; the mystery of Śiva, chaste and ithyphallic at the same moment. W. D. O'Flaherty has recently dedicated a notable study to this argument [31]). In this study, basing herself mostly on the

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27) For this aspect the concept of *brahman* outlined in *Aitareya Upaniṣad*, 5, is illuminating: the *brahman* is knowledge (*prajñā*), and, together, strength, power to realise (*kratu*), the cosmos is guided and sustained by the *brahman* as *prajñā*: *sarvaṃ tat prajñānetraṃ prajñāne pratiṣṭhitam.*

28) M. Eliade, *Yoga. Immortalité et Liberté*, Paris 1954, pp. 33-49.

29) Id., *Méphistophélès et l'Androgyne*, Paris 1962, pp. 148-150.

30) Cf. for ex. *Kulārṇavatantra*, quoted in M. Eliade, "Introduction au Tantrisme", in *Approches de l'Inde*, Paris 1949, p. 143.

31) W. D. O'Flaherty, "Asceticism and Sexuality in the Mythology of Śiva", I and II, HR, VIII (1969), pp. 300-338; IX (1969), pp. 1-42. For following quotations see: part II, 36; part I, p. 315-316; II, p. 25; I, p. 303. For references to Tantrism see I 309, 332-337; II, 39-41. On bipolarity and micro- and macrocosmic aspects of Śiva-symbolism see V. S. Agrawala, *Śiva Mahādeva: The Great God*, Varanasi 1966.

documentation offered by the Purāṇas, she demonstrates how, in spite of appearance, the two more characteristic traits of Śiva, i.e. the asceticism (*tapas*) and sexuality (*kāma*) are not two contrasting elements that are mutually exclusive, but rather two complementary aspects of one and the same force. These two powers "cannot be dispersed or destroyed, but only transmuted into one another: ... for his (i.e. Śiva's) ascetic powers are sexual powers, ... the *tapas* that he performs gives him still greater sexual powers". And if such an ambivalence finds its more plastic expression in the Śiva myth, it is yet much more ancient: already in the Ṛg Veda Agastya "nourishes both paths", i.e. *tapas* and *kāma*, and elsewhere Agni, who is intimately associated with the sacrifice and with the *tapas* is said to be the cause of sexual union as well. Furthermore, the intimate convergence of *tapas* and *kama* will be explicit in creation, that "usually proceeds from a combination of the erotic and ascetic powers... It is only by 'destroying' Kāma that Śiva releases the full power of *kāma*". On a microcosmic level all this finds a particularly explicit translation in certain tantric rituals, founded, precisely on an interaction of *tapas* and *kāma*. It seems to us that this opens the possibility to most interesting developments. For if the Śiva-myth among other things involves the ritual practice of seminal retention (*ūrdhvaretas*), then it will not express so much "the need that can never be fulfilled", i.e. an unrealisable desire to conciliate *tapas* and *kāma*, but rather, on the contrary, in the case of a tantric adept, will it express an effective possibility for self-creation or integration, following laws analogous to the one of the macrocosm creation, i.e. a combination of *tapas* and *kāma*.

This could perhaps throw a light on the difficult problem of which rituals could eventually be related to the cosmogonic doctrines, if we would like to get a confirmation of the thesis of the "myth and ritual" school.

Anyway, what we have said until now about Śiva, gives further consolidation to the unitarian micro- and macrocosmic vision that interests us in these notes; a vision that, by definition, is contrary to any anti-cosmic conception at all. As far as the tantric rituals are concerned,—which are in many cases the negation of antisomatism—it is most probable that they deserve more attention than they have received until now. As a matter of fact, they might be able to illuminate some questions of general importance. Apart from the problem of the cosmogonies to which we referred above, we have the case of apparently incomprehensible symbols. For instance, in one of his works, F. D. K.

Bosch [32]) finds difficulty in explaining the iconographic representations of the *liṅga* and the *yoni* in which the *liṅga*, instead of being naturally put with its head downwards, appears, on the contrary, with its head pointing upwards. Now we wonder if this is not for the simple reason that the inversion of the *liṅga* is the only way to represent the *ūrdhvaretas* plastically.

Leaving Tantrism on one side, we return to a direct consideration of the anticosmism question. And here, if we accept that the yogin searches for an absurd escape from the cosmos instead of an integration with it on a higher level, we would get this contradiction: a sudden jump into the non-cosmos, right after having followed analogous laws to the cosmogonic and cosmologic ones, for an integrative end on an individual psycho-psychical level, as M. Falk has shown for the upaniṣadic period: the *ākāśa* or ether-space that is present in the heart, is co-extensive with the universal *ākāśa* and since everything is made out of the latter, even the *ākāśa* of the heart may create [33]) and thus one gets to the supreme upaniṣadic *puruṣa* through the *prāṇa*, a vital principle that again, as its quintessence, results from the unification of the organic and physic senses [34]). And frequently, soul, *prāṇa* and *semen* are identified, *tout court* [35]). The universal *brahman* in himself is the quintessence of the elements. And these, again, are the equivalent of the senses on a macrocosmic level. So we are still *in* the cosmos, following laws of analogical and unitarian functioning. To go back to more ancient periods yet, in the same way the necessity of separating the two polarities sky world before creating, realized by Indra to make fecundation possible, or else the initial splitting of the One in Mind and Desire [36]) for the same reason, bring us, on a microcosmic level, to the same necessity to split *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* to generate the new man. And remaining within the cosmos, the fundamental problem of knowledge will not be to wonder how to get out of it, but rather how to transcend the false vision of the cosmos,—the vision only and not the cosmos *in se*,—responsible for the *saṃsāra*; the problem will be how to overcome the never-ceasing identification

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32) F. D. K. Bosch, *The Golden Germ*, The Hague 1960, p. 166.

33) Reff. in Falk, *Nāma-rūpa*, *cit.*, pp. 28-29.

34) *Ibid.*, p. 40.

35) Cf. for reff. and for a comparative treatment of the question, R. B. Onians, *The Origins of European Thought*, Cambridge 1954², pp. 119, 196, 484.

36) Cf. S. Kramrisch, *The Triple Structure of Creation in the Ṛg Veda*, HR, II, 1961, pp. 140-175, in partic. pp. 141-143.

of the cosmos with everything that is not the cosmos, how to see things *yathābhūtam*, the way they really are.

4. *Knowledge and power*

Of course when we talk about this last kind of knowledge, we do not mean intellectual knowledge, for this implies a profound transformation of the individual. In many important Indian traditions—as we have already pointed out elsewhere [37])—this dynamic aspect of knowledge, i.e. this internal and external power that the adept progressively acquires, is extremely important for liberation, knowledge of oneself, and psycho-physical purification. In this connexion we must keep in mind the ever increasing creative power, sovereign power, and omniscience, that are traditionally attributed to the *bodhisattvas* and buddhas, to the tantric *sādhaka*, to *jīvanmukta*, to the yogin who has reached a certain level. This is to say that frequently in India, knowledge means knowledge-power. But only very rarely do Indologists direct their attention to such a conception of knowledge-power, especially as far as the Upaniṣads are concerned. In fact, although we have today a more correct appreciation of this subject than Deussen's vedāntic one, nevertheless there is still a general tendency to consider the Upaniṣads especially as metaphysic, mysticism, or philosophy. In the studies we have already quoted, F. Edgerton has been one of the few to take strong objection to this way of considering the Upaniṣads. On the one hand he connects the Upaniṣads with the Veda (see above), and on the other he discourses at length, precisely on the knowledge-power, which he believes to be fundamental to the Upaniṣads; these texts, according to this Author, are based on a "magical philosophy". It is absurd, says Edgerton, to see in them an abstract research for knowledge. What does count, instead, is the magic power inherent to knowledge, capable of satisfying every desire and of guaranteeing the mastering of one's own destiny. To illustrate this point Edgerton quotes many upaniṣadic excerpts [38])—mostly neglected—that have for subject the endless power that is granted to the upaniṣadic seer who has reached realization of the *ātman*. In this way Edgerton can give a precise sense to these quotations—too many in number to be neglected—inserting them in a coherent and unitarian context.

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[37]) Pensa, *op. cit.*

[38]) Cf. Edgerton, "The Upaniṣads", *cit.*, p. 104, fn. 12 and *The Beginnings, cit.*, p. 29, fn. 2.

However, M. Falk, whom we mentioned above, makes a drastic distinction between the "true" and "false" Upaniṣads, and between the "true" and "false" sections of one and the same Upaniṣad. The true ones are supposed to be the ones with a mystical content, founded on the psycho-cosmological analogy. The "false" ones, on the other hand, are the ones still recalling the Brahmanic magical-ritualistic ideology. How is it—is what we ask ourselves—how is it that these two contrasting currents do flow together after all? According to Falk the adepts of the magical-ritualistic trend interpolated in mystical texts excerpts that were in conformity with their own ideology [39]).

Before discussing this thesis, we shall first consider the opinion of M. Biardeau, who also considers the Upaniṣads in an interesting sociological perspective [40]). The starting point is again the noting of a splitting in the upaniṣadic world: on one hand, there is the *sannyāsa*, the renunciation, as a way to final realisation; on the other hand the *svārājya*, i.e. the universal sovereignity. And so, if she takes a starting point similar to that of M. Falk, her explanation of it is quite different; in fact, the responsibility for the magical attitude (*svārājya*) is not ascribed to sacerdotal groups, who reject mystical tendencies, but rather to the man in the world that adapts a religious idea (i.e. the *sannyāsa*) to secular needs, to a man that misunderstands the real aims and uses the conquered power for his own ends.

We believe that the contributions here examined are very important and that there is considerable truth in them. But nevertheless we think that they should be treated with some reservation.

To summarize: Edgerton, not only proposes a unitarian conception of the Upaniṣads, at least of the ancient ones, but also considers as strictly associated, on a magical philosophy basis, Atharva Veda, Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads, while he partly dissociates from this nucleous the Ṛg Veda world because of its being founded on the "ritualistic religion". M. Falk associates together the mystical-mythical trend of the Upaniṣads, of the Atharva Veda, of the Ṛg Veda and of Yoga; she separates from this group whatever has something to do with rite: i.e. the ritual part of these same texts and the Brāhmaṇas. M. Biardeau distinguishes two types in the Upaniṣads: the renouncer and the man in the world, the former responsible for the religious conception, the latter for the magical one.

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39) Falk, *Il Mito*, *cit.*, pp. 714-716.

40) M. Biardeau, "*Ahamkāra*, The Ego Principle in the Upaniṣads", *Contributions to Indian Sociology*", VIII (1965), pp. 62-84, especially pp. 79-80.

5. *Knowledge and power: discussion of the above-mentioned thesis*

Now, it is certainly true that the Upaniṣads are full of interpolations, disparity of trend, and criticism of brahmanic orthodoxy. But we ask ourselves whether it is not over-simplified to neglect (M. Falk) all the magical-ritualistic passages, which are numerous and coherent as Edgerton has observed; and whether it is not hazardous to judge as spurious an element that recurs so frequently, i.e., the knowledge-power. Furthermore, when deciding without any hesitation whether something is true or false in the Upaniṣads, is there no *a priori* implicit? And further, the combination of "magic" with "mythical-mystical-philosophy" is something that can be found also in successive phases of Hinduism, especially in the Tantric schools. Is it possible for us always to presuppose magical-sacerdotal groups manipulating the texts? Or anyway, for us to hypothesize a permanent contrast between the "true" and the "false", between "mystical" and "magical" in the various types of Indian gnostic speculation?

As far as the opposition between "religious" and "secular" mentioned by M. Biardeau is concerned, this seems to us much more probable, and may be found also outside the Upaniṣads. Nevertheless, we think that one thing is to affirm that the use of power for empiric finalities is an easy deviation in religious practice, and quite another to hold that the doctrine itself of *svārājya* or *aiśvarya*, as it appears in the texts, has been introduced as a "secular re-working of a religious idea".

We have seen elsewhere—and we do not think it necessary to repeat all our argumentation here—that for instance in Buddhism there is no contrast between *abhijñās* or supernormal knowledge-powers, and the final realization (*nirodha*): the latter, on the contrary, is frequently represented by the supreme *abhijñā* (the sixth). What is important is not to indulge in the power just acquired, but to improve this power evermore, to purify it from attachment: the conquest of the maximum yogic level (*kaivalya*) presupposes, really, a very great power, that developed by the *nirodha-samādhi*. As for yoga, in the Upaniṣads as well the *aiśvarya* or power is not a deviation from the right aim, but rather *a step* towards it. And because of the common presuppositions of Upaniṣads and Yoga (that Falk herself has well illustrated) [41])

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41) For the *aiśvarya* concept in the Upaniṣads see Falk, *Il Mito, cit.*, pp. 466, 548, 717.

and due to the common karmic-energetic conception, all this seems logical to us and we do not feel any necessity to postulate the intrusion of "lay" groups, at least as far as the enunciation of the principle is concerned. But we do admit that, later, in the application of it and in the elaboration of the principle of knowledge-power, similar lay groups may have been of some influence; and that for this reason such a sociological aspect must be kept present, to avoid partiality in our historical-religious vision.

As far as Edgerton is concerned, we feel he is right when he stresses the element of knowledge-power in the Upaniṣads as important. But on the other hand we also believe that such an interpretation is excessively reductive. In other words, we do not believe that the wealthy upaniṣadic speculation could be reduced to such a crude utilitarian finality: "The knowledge of the One which is All, and its identification with the human soul, is then a short-cut to the satisfaction of all desires, the freedom from all fear and danger and sorrow" [42]). Over and above the quotations upon which Edgerton bases his conclusions there are others that do not fit in such a rigid scheme. Be it enough to think of a few famous passages of Yājñavalkya. Furthermore, if Edgerton on the one hand asserts the continuity of various phases in ancient Indian religion, on the basis of the so-called "magical philosophy", on the other hand he ends up in denying partly such a continuity when he writes, for instance: "...ritualistic religion is the moribund element. Magical philosophy constantly tends to get the upper hand" [43]), while M. Falk establishes a stronger relation between Ṛg Veda and Upaniṣads, thanks to the psycho-cosmological component which she finds back in the Ṛg Veda also.

And here problems become of a more general order, and transcend the specifically Indological field as they spur us on to investigate the meaning of the rite: what relation is there between ritual practice and psychical practice? between magic rite and religious rite? or, more generally, between magic and religions? G. van der Leeuw and, more recently, J. de Vries consider both spheres as relatively close to each other [44]). But nevertheless the impression is that such a line of study—that would be of vital importance for India—is still in its

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42) Edgerton, "The Upaniṣads", *cit.*, p. 112.

43) *Ibid.*, p. 108.

44) J. de Vries, "Magic and Religion", HR, I (1962), pp. 214-221; see especially pp. 220-21.

beginnings. Anyway, going back to India, we feel that we cannot dissent from J. Gonda's opinion, when he acknowledges his difficulties in fixing the precise limits between magic and religion in Vedism [45]). Furthermore the same Author, in the above mentioned studies on the vedic "vision" has supplied us with an important starting point: in the *dhīḥ*, i.e. in one of the more ancient expressions of Indian practical speculative tradition, the magical ritual element, the mythical one, and the mystical one are all present and interdependent. And it is on this basis, starting from this germ, so to speak, that a great part of the posterior Indian tradition developed. As a matter of fact, in India's typologically gnostic trends the combination of the three elements mentioned above is always present, although the incidence of each of them may vary for each case.

6. *Conclusions*

We would now like to draw some conclusions about what has been said; conclusions that will be more than ever provisionary, considering the extent of the arguments treated.

(a) The relation Vedism/post-Vedism, opens a perspective of very interesting research: it stimulates the study of how two moments, the psycho-cosmological one and the ritual one, (or also the mythical-mystical and the magical-ritual) far from being reciprocally opposed the one to the other, are rather interpenetrating each other; how they dissolve the one into the other, with a unitary conception for result. In fact, if we accept the importance of a psychical and soteriological value in myth from Indian antiquity on (for a vast documentation on this subject, we refer to M. Falk) we do not see why the rite should be denied such a value. This would imply the rite's being dissociated—in spite of its central position—from such a fundamental finality as the soteric one. In this frame then, the vedic-brahmanic-upaniṣadic rite acquires the meaning not only of a social and magical activity, but also of an individual soteric practice, in interexchange relation with the psycho-cosmological reflexion; so that the one becomes the support, the food, and the checking of the other.

(b) The conception of a knowledge-power—be it ritual or psychical

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[45]) J. Gonda, *Die Religionen Indiens*, I, Stuttgart 1960; French transl. Paris 1962, chap. III, p. 130.

—does not imply *in itself* a magistic degeneration, at least on a certain level. The texts seem perfectly aware of the danger of degeneration and therefore continuously warn against the powers and the entanglement that attachment to them could bring forth. We might perhaps define it as a magical-philosophical conception, the way Edgerton suggests, but only on condition that we give to the concept of magic and magical philosophy a field and deepness which it does not possess at the present time.

On the other hand it is clear that a strict magistic-dynamic solution may not do justice to the meaning of the psycho-cosmological conception that recurs in Indian tradition and of the conception of a knowledge-power associated with it. In our opinion the texts, at times withholding their attention "scientifically" on the element of knowledge-power, and at times falling into hyperboles, try to make out especially in what way the adept logically gets a creative virtue out of his progressive knowledge of the ultimate principle and out of his gradual transformation in it.

To know the *brahman* is to *become* the *brahman*, the way in gnosis to know God is to become God. But to become *brahman*, universal support, may mean anything but an extinction. Thus, not outside the cosmos or against it, but *inside* and *for* the cosmos; history will no longer be standed, but created, since to realize the *brahman* will mean to incarnate the free creativity of it, that is its very characteristic.

(c) And finally to come back to the comparative question, from which we took our start, it seems to us that for the present we may affirm that in the measure in which gnosis, taken in its historical and typological meaning, is equal to dualism, pessimism, anti-cosmism, and anti-somatism, the affinity India-Gnosis must be restricted to the animology and to soteriology, since we have found no sufficient confirmation for the prevalence of the negativistic attitude in India. But we do wonder whether, having stated the necessity, for India, of a more complex approach instead of rigid postulates, this might not have brought forth a suggestion in a comparative sense to deepen the study of those vitalistic and naturistic tendencies, over a non-dualistic background, to which attention has been already called for certain trends of gnosticism [46]), and for Manicheism [47]).

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46) Cf. Bianchi, "Le problème des origines du gnosticisme" *cit.*, pp. 5-13; "Basilide", etc., *cit.*

47) Cf. Gh. Gnoli, "La Gnosi iranica", in *Le Origini, cit.*, pp. 281-290.

DISCUSSION

BAUSANI. — I wish to congratulate Prof. Pensa on the persuasiveness of his paper and the many concrete examples on which it is based. I also appreciate the fact that he has cleared the field of the many generalizations on Indian thought that are frequent not only in almost all of the popular works, but even with some scholars. The only topic that puzzles me somewhat is the fact that he projects gnostic typology into an archaic epoch. It is my opinion that, typologically, gnosis was formed concretely—in various forms and religions—at a particular historical moment for particular reasons. However, it seems as if in the three preceding papers *) there was a trend to project the phenomenon of gnosis, though rightly analysed, into archaic epochs: in this way we would have a Zarathushtra gnostic, a Moses, and Vedas all gnostic in tendency. Perhaps the Vedas could offer some support for this. In any case I would like this topic to be explained more clearly.

PENSA. — I see it this way: We will have to accept a certain "gnostic" implication in the Vedas to the extent that it is determined that the Upaniṣads—in which a certain gnostic or pre-gnostic structure may be found—are akin with the Vedas. This, of course, without denying the difference that does exist between the upaniṣadic sphere and the strictly vedic one, and without forgetting the entire period of elaboration and evolution that passed between one period and the other.

BIANCHI. — I would like to point out that in those works of mine, to which Prof. Pensa referred at the end of his paper, it was my intention to explain how impossible it is to reduce gnosticism to mere pessimism and anti-cosmism and how little sense it has to talk of pessimism *tout court*, and how anticosmism did indeed occur, but often in a dialectical context: be it enough to think of the Ophitic speculation of the snake-*logos*—descending and ascending—and of the Simonian speculation of the Μεγάλη Ἀπόφασις. I have also stressed the point that, in fact, the vitalistic element is very frequent in gnosis and that it is full of references to cosmic and cosmogonic activities. I believe I have shown how the entire sexual symbol system of gnosis fits into this vitalistic mentality in which I see the reasons for an ancient connection with fertility-rites. The entire gnostic speculation is based on those themes: fertility, creation, cosmos, although these are seen in the light of the dualistic and anticosmic element.

An important topic that could be analyzed is the combination of

*) Prof. Michelini Tocci's paper is hinted at here as well (see on p. X) [Edd.].

monism and dualism. I have devoted an article to this argument, "Le dualisme dans l'histoire des religions" (R.H.R., t. 159 [1961]; cf. also my communication to the Stockholm congress for the history of religions, 1970), many pages of which attempt to explain how the monistic element and the dualistic one not only do not exclude each other, but often generate each other; and this happens in Indian, as well as in Greek speculation. Be it enough here to recall the Orphic myth and the Pythagorean reflexion on monad-dyad—a reflexion that implies the theme of cosmism and anti-cosmism. The speculation on the One is speculation on the splitting of same, which means a speculation that is typically monistic/dualistic, i.e. precisely that particular speculation present in those forms of gnosis which I was referring to, especially the Ophitic one.

PENSA. — First of all I must say that in my paper I was referring especially to Indological studies where it is most easy to come across such kinds of simplification (pessimism, dualism) that may lead to great difficulties for a historical-religious approach. Secondly, as far as gnosticism proper is concerned, if it is true that in those works of Prof. Bianchi's that we discussed, the thesis of a unilateral dualism is rejected, it is also true that in the writings of many other authors we may find those very simplifications that we were talking about for India.

TADDEI. — I would like to observe that, in my opinion, Prof. Pensa's communication is lacking in one respect: he has failed to take the religious iconography into consideration. This lacuna is most common in the study of history of Indian religions, where a clear separation may be found between purely iconographic researches and historical-religious researches that fail to take the iconography into consideration.

And I am not referring only to Tantrism, where, of course, it is well known that there is a close interdependence between written texts and iconography. I rather wish to refer—and for this point see Prof. Tucci's recent studies—to that part of Buddhism that is non-tantric or, shall we say, pre-tantric and partly perhaps prototantric; i.e. I wish to refer to all of that part of Buddhism that could be better understood by thorough research on the iconography, from the first Indian art-schools up to the Gupta epoch. In a period, that is, in which the iconography was not as much an illustration of a written text, but rather something that in my opinion was following the same path as the written text.

And it is this lacuna that causes research on Indian religion to be restricted to the aspect of the philosophical or theoretical *élite*, over-

shadowing the basic religiousness in India, that certainly did not match perfectly with such trends as Upaniṣadic speculation.

PENSA. — As far as the religious iconography is concerned, I believe that Prof. Taddei's observation is most constructive: as a matter of fact it is necessary for all of us, interested in Indian religions, to pay ever more attention to the iconographic material in our historical-religious research.